Worship in Wood

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WORSHIP IN WOOD

BY

THOMAS M. BOYD

ILLUSTRATIONS
BY HAROLD SMALLEY

PUBLISHED BY AMERICAN SEATING COMPANY
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
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1927

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

From the Press of
A. P. JOHNSON COMPANY
Grand Rapids,
Mich.

To all builders of churches;
to all students of the ecclesiastic arts; to all worshipers
who through beauty of
temple architecture and
interior church adornment
desire to express their devotion to God, this volume
is dedicated

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PREFACE

As he presents this work to the public, the author has this hope: That the book will foster the desire to erect houses of worship which will be enduring monuments to the intelligence, the taste and the spiritual sincerity of our advanced times.

This is not a history. It is but a modest effort to tell what the temple builders of the ages undertook to do in honor of the Deity or the gods they worshiped, and an attempt to draw from the record of the past more sure guidance for the temple builders of today.

We can, and should, profit by experience. Therefore, we should be acquainted with what has been the high purpose and the directing impulse of those who in other days erected and furnished the edifices acclaimed inspirational by all mankind. Having this knowledge, we can adapt and improve, utilizing modern skill and methods to attain results otherwise impossible of realization.

Builders of churches must approach their task with reverence, with a full appreciation of their far-reaching responsibilities. In these days every member of the congregation, parish or society contemplating the erection of a house of worship designed for public use, has a share in this responsibility. In a more restricted sense, the group or committee to whom the whole congregation or society assigns the duty of selecting site, architect, builder and interior decoration, shoulders the burden. Yet, in all too many instances, the building committees are made up of individuals who are not schooled in the ecclesiastic arts, who have no wide knowledge of what has or can be done, and who have no definite idea of what they want to accomplish.

Church building differs from house building. The individual may know what he wants in his home, but he may have very hazy notions about what is appropriate for the House of God. Members of building committees often insist upon certain details to the detriment of the one big purpose sought to be attained. The iron molder cannot perform with satisfaction the work of a wood carver. No more can those unacquainted with the details of church building hope to plan a sacred edifice that shall be in keeping with the traditions of religious worship while

still reckoning with modern conditions of life and a corresponding expression of devotion.

We have all that any nation ever had—and more. We can draw upon the resources of the earth, wherever found. We have many capable architects and designers, thousands of skilled craftsmen, new forms of power, devices unknown to the ancients. We have whole classes of citizens who devote their abilities and their energies to church building and equipment. We have all the past to guide us. Thus there is every reason why we should strive to exceed the past in the beauty, in the spiritual environment of our temples to God.

The intention of the author is to place the builders of churches in a church-building frame of mind. To do that, it has been necessary to take them back to the earliest inspirations of worship and aid them in the study of the spiritual as well as the technical requirements of temple builders.

In the compilation of this work, I am indebted to many of my compeers in the study of church furniture, to general histories too numerous to mention, and to architects and pastors who have generously given me the results of their study and experience. I have attempted to discard much that is partially relevant, presenting only the most vital and significant facts which will guide the planners of our houses of worship. Hence, I hope my readers will be enabled to reach conclusions quickly and intelligently.

This work, therefore, has resolved itself into a philosophical guide to the spirit and good intent, and it is submitted in the hope that whatever worthwhile information it may contain will be reflected in the added beauty and comfort of such church interiors as it may influence.

THOMAS M. BOYD

Chicago, Illinois, January 10, 1927.

WHAT THIS BOOK CONTAINS

CHAPTER ONE

The Dawn of Worship in the Heart of Man 15

CHAPTER TWO

The Glory of the Temple in Egypt, Greece and Rome 21

EGYPT 21

GREECE 23

ROME 26

CHAPTER THREE

Early Man In Europe Had No Spiritual Home 31

CHAPTER FOUR

The Star of Bethlehem 35

CHAPTER FIVE

Lessons in Church Building From the Middle Ages 41

THE BYZANTINE CHURCH 43

THE ROMANESQUE 45

CHAPTER SIX

Gothic—The Contribution of an Age 47

CHAPTER SEVEN

Reverence and Beauty of the Chancel 53

ALTARS 56

CHANCEL RAILS 61

SCREENS 61

LECTERNS 66

CHAPTER EIGHT

Early American Churches 69

CHAPTER NINE

Comfort and Repose in Worship 79

APPROACHING THE IDEAL IN CHURCH FURNISHING 84

L'ENVOI 87

ILLUSTRATIONS

Organ, Choir and Pulpit, Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church, Detroit, Michigan *Frontispiece*

Reredos Panel Carved in Wood, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Springfield, Illinois, Expressing Type of Civilization in the Days of Melchizedek 16

Temple Emanu El, San Francisco, California 24

St. Agnes Roman Catholic Church, Cleveland, Ohio. The First Real Basilican Type in the Lombardy Style in the United States 38

Modern Bishop's Chair, After the Romanesque Style 44

Choir Stall and Bishop's Chair, Trinity Episcopal Church, Cleveland, Ohio 48

Rood Screen, Pulpit and Lectern, All Saints Episcopal Church, Pasadena, California 56

Chancel, Altar, Pulpit and Lectern, Grace Lutheran Church, Wadsworth, Ohio 64

Section of Wesley Chapel, Metropolitan Methodist Episcopal Church, Detroit, Michigan 72

Reredos Panel, Trinity Episcopal Church, Bay City, Michigan, Portraying the Transfiguration, Described in Matthew XVII. The Figures Represent Christ, Moses, Elias and the Apostle John 80

TEXT EMBELLISHMENTS

The Everburning Fire in the Sacred Groves, 16

Ruins of the Ishtar Gate, Babylon, 17

The Nomadic Semite, 18

Study of King Solomon's Temple—After Helme and Corbett, 19

The Sedentary Sumerian, 20

View of Ancient Philae, Egypt, 22

Decoration Showing Combined Use of Lotus and Papyrus, 23

The Zeus of Phidias in the Temple of Olympus at Elis, Greece, 24

Greek Stele, 25

The Vestals of Rome Tending the Altar Fires, 26

Roman Wayside Shrine, 27

The Roman Praying, 28

Early Temple Builders, 29

The North People Dwelt in Caves Left by the Receding Glaciers, 32

The Body of the Chief Carried to Sea by His Flaming "Drakskepp," 33

The Early Druids Made Human Sacrifices, 34

The Powerful Emperor Bowed Before the All-Powerful, 36

The Early Christians Were Continually Persecuted, 37

Paul Was a Missionary, an Organizer, a Master, 38

The First Meeting Places of the Christians Were in the Catacombs, 39

From the Days of the Apostles Christians Knelt in Prayer, 40

The Majesty of the Gothic Architecture, 42

Baptismal Font in Munnerstadt on the Lauen, 43

St. Sophia at Constantinople, 44
Detail of Verdun Altar, 45
Old Moorish Temple, Eighth Century, 46
The Inspiring Light that Streams Through a Gothic Window, 48
Gothic Tower, Early French Church, 49
The Baptism of Conrad II, 50
The Apse, Liverpool Cathedral, 51
Constructing Model of Cathedral, Middle Ages, 54
Finial of Choir Stall, Modern, 55
Early Altar, Etruscan, 56
Early Christian Cross From Milan, 57
Carved Top of Prayer Desk, Modern Adaptation, 58
Carved Figure From a Reredos, 59
Carved Panel, Modern, 60
Chancel Rail, Modern, 61
Carved Figure From Medieval Manuscript, 62
Detail of Pulpit, Modern, 63
Elisha in Wood, Pulpit Decoration, 64
Carved Panel of Pulpit, Modern, 65
Eagle Top of Lectern From Church at Tongres, 66
Detail of Lectern, Modern, 67
Pulpit of Nicola Pisana at Pisa, 68
America Was Settled Soon After the Reformation, 70
Pulpit at Old Ship Meeting House, Hingham, Mass., 71
Window in St. Luke's, Smithfield, Virginia, 72
Gloria Dei, "Old Swedes" Church, Philadelphia, 73
Spire of Old North Church, Boston, 74
Colonnade, King's Chapel, Boston, 75
Pulpit, Christ Church, Alexandria, Va., 76
San Jose Mission, San Antonio, 77
The Comforts We Enjoy Today Were Unknown to the Early Christians, 80
The Bishop's Chair, Modern, 81
Side of Church Chair, Modern, 82
Baptismal Font, Modern, 83
End of Choir Stall, Modern, 84
Riddle Post, Modern, 85
L'Envoi, 86

WORSHIP IN WOOD

The Dawn of Worship in the Heart and Mind of Man

CHAPTER ONE

IN ANY contemplation of church building, we are reminded that mankind always has had some form of religious worship. Primitive man probably began by worshiping the forces of nature, which he feared. He early worshiped the sun, and fire, which he somehow associated with the sun. He worshiped the winds, the lightning, the mountain, the forest, the river. Likewise, he worshiped the seed, the blooming of his crops and the phenomena of plant and organic life. As his imagination developed, he created more objects of veneration. He imagined gods to fit all his moods, all his desires, all his activities.

It has been this veneration for the infinite and the finite, for the great and the small, for the visible and invisible that in all times and ages has urged mankind to put forth its best in the shaping of its tributes to its deities. Early man gave of his best and choicest fruits in his offerings to his gods. He commandeered the best in the crafts and arts in the building of temples for those gods and gave of the best in his life to win their favor.

Primitive man made the unseen and the unreal seem real by making images and worshiping them. He conceived of household gods, of tribal gods, of gods that punished his enemies and of gods that gave him the victory in battle. A little later he created gods that ripened his grain, made his wine good, made his cattle multiply, made him prosper in love.

The Everburning Fire in the Sacred Groves

"Like a child having the intellectual and spiritual elements chiefly enveloped in the physical," says Knight, "as the leaf, flower and fruit are included in the bud, so mankind at first comprehended religious ideas as a unity, not distinguishing the envelope from what it enclosed, the symbol from the idea which it typified. Afterwards they began to perceive that there was a kernel inside the shell, and even further that there was a germ or rudiment of a future plant included in both—that the present rugged forms of worship comprised ideas and principles ramifying into the profoundest details of science, art and philosophy. Then immortality was born of the faculty of veneration; for he who can perceive God in the universe will recognize himself as divine from the existence of that power of perceiving; and that which is divine is immortal."

Having given a definite existence to his deities, man next gave them a home, in the forest, in the cave, in the hut. Whatever was thus set aside for purposes of worship became the shrine or sanctuary, always beautiful, always commanding. Ceremony became essential, for all could not take the same part in the public worship of the gods. So arose the priesthood, the holy men. The shrine, the sacred grove, became the forum, the meeting place of the tribe. It became the place of barter. An altar was set up and on it sacrifices to the gods were offered. At this altar tribal chiefs or petty kings were consecrated; here wars were declared and terms of peace concluded; here the first hospital for the war wounded was established, with the priests acting as medical men; here marriage was celebrated.

Fire, which nearly all early men recognized as a symbol of immortality, was kept burning in the sanctuary, before the altar. The fire tenders became the elders, the wise men, the seers, the diviners of the future. The priesthood grew in influence, in power, until often it overshadowed the tribal chieftain or king.

The crude sanctuary in the grove, the sacred priesthood of primitive man, survived throughout the ages, although in many differing forms. Our religions of today, our churches, our forms and ceremonials, our priesthoods, may be traced back to the sanctuary in the forest. The very fire that always burned in the sacred grove is kept lighted today in thousands of our churches. The various portions of the church structure are based on the outlines established for the forest sanctuary. We still have

the railing that in ancient times separated the priests and the rulers of the tribe from the common men. Inside this railing is the altar, just as in primitive times or in the days of the Hebrews, who placed their Ark of the Covenant where common man could not come in contact with this Holy of Holies. Our pulpit may be said to be the modern counterpart of the large stone which the northern peoples often placed immediately to the right of the railing and upon which sat the king, or "law-man." The hut or *prytaneum* of the eternal fire of the ancients has become the apse of our churches.

When man became less nomadic, learned to till the soil, had domesticated animals and settled down to a fixed place of abode, he naturally built a home for his gods, even as he built a home for himself. And so came the temple, modeled, as is our modern church, on the forest shrine. In the proportion that enlightenment and culture have attuned races to higher ideals, in the same proportion have their temples testified to their spiritual and material progress. The temple in all the older ages represented the people of the city or country that built it. It was as typical of the people as their laws and customs. Indeed, even more than these, it summed up in itself the hopes, ambitions, desires, aims, purposes, fears and hatreds of the people. The temples of mankind have become the records through which we have learned a great deal, if not most, of the past.

Planning and building temples helped mankind to advance in the arts and in the crafts, as church building today helps to keep us attuned to the finer things in life. For ages no one cared about the appearance of his dwelling place. Buildings were small and devoted largely to the immediate needs of the family, or in some instances, of the ruler or petty king governing the commonwealth. But with the building of temples came the requirement not alone of beauty and art but also of depth, breadth, proportion and architectural symmetry. Temples became of the greatest importance in both the religious and economic lives of the people who built them. Artists and artisans were often imported to erect and embellish them. This led to increased communication and contact and to the spread of knowledge and ideals. It brought races and peoples together for higher purposes than mere commerce. It made for human progress.

Ruins of the Ishtar Gate, Babylon

The Nomadic Semite

It is not surprising that we should find in the historic Mesopotamian valley in Asia the earliest stories of worship, temple building and religious developments. At this very moment American archaeological expeditions are digging in the ruins of the most ancient cities in this wonderful valley, and from time to time we are given details of the valuable finds in the temples of the Sumerians. Here, in close proximity to the Garden of Eden, man began to record his worship, to organize it and to apply it to human contacts. Here, 5000 years before the Christian era, between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, was fought out the epic warfare between the Sumerian and Semitic peoples. It was in the struggle between these two races—the sedentary, culture-loving Sumerian, and the roving Semite—over the times covered by our Scriptures, that temple building found its first definite impetus. And it must never be forgotten that from this Mesopotamian region, out of Semitic thought, three of the greatest religions of all times have grown—Judaism, Mohammedanism and Christianity.

From 5000 to 2200 B. C., Western Asia derived its spiritual and theological inspiration from Nippur, the "sacred city" of the Sumerians on the banks of the Euphrates. The city was built around the temple of the Earth God. The temple was a city in itself, with its own libraries and archives, records of wars and dynasties, tax lists, court proceedings and civil and religious disputes. This temple was enriched during centuries by the votive offerings of kings and wealthy nobles and traders. This wealth attracted the cupidity of foreign conquerors and many wars were fought for control of Nippur and its rich temple of the Earth God.

After Nippur, Babylon became the great center of eastern culture so far as we of the western world have been influenced. The very name "Babylon" is significant of its temple atmosphere. Taken from the Greek, it means "the gate of the god." This city comes into prominence and becomes the capital of Babylonia with Hammurabi, about 2250 B. C. All its conquering claimants were required to "take the hand of Bel Merodach" (Marduk), which means in reality securing the support of the Babylonian priesthood. Failure thus to invoke the good will of the god was on several occasions proven to be disastrous.

As the Hebrews, during the captivity, borrowed so much for their own religion from that of Babylonia, it will be worth our while to inquire

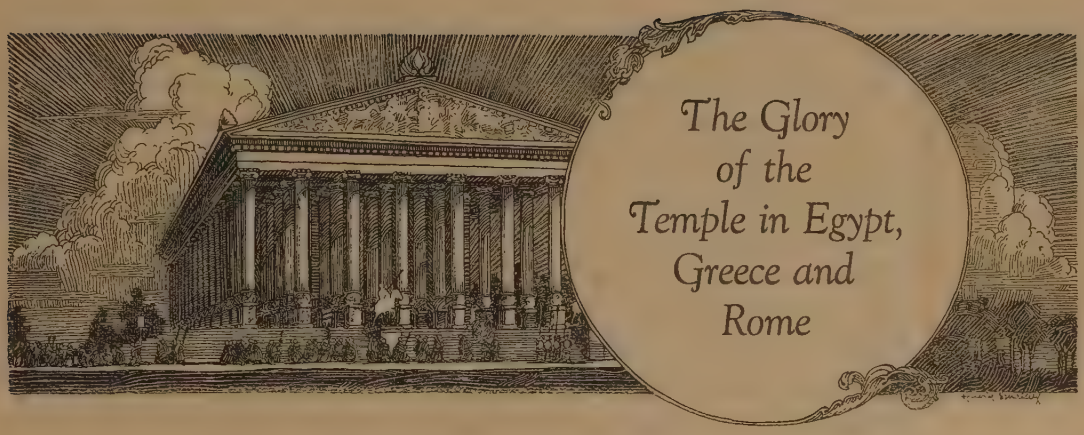
Study of King Solomon's Temple—After Helme and Corbett

The Sedentary Sumerian

into the religion of Babylon. Marduk is credited with having originally built the city of Babylon and its temples, as he had created the earth in co-operation with the goddess Aruru. "The characteristic feature of the Babylonian temple," says G. F. Moore in his "History of Religions," "is the staged tower, or pyramid, of solid masonry which arose within the temple precincts. A ramp led up to the summit on which, according to Herodotus, stood a small shrine. About the tower was a complex of buildings and courts, covering an extensive area and in some cases occupying an entire quarter of a city. Before the temple proper, in which the image of the god was housed, lay one or more courts surrounded by rooms for the vessels used in worship and the treasures of the god, the storage of materials for the offerings and revenues of the temple in agricultural products and for the use of the priests. Other buildings served as record offices, where legal instruments of every kind were deposited. The great temples were endowed with extensive lands and had large revenues from them, as well as from the priests' fees and from pious donations. Their capital was often put out at the customary high rate of interest. In addition to their other functions, the temples thus, as frequently in antiquity, did a banking business."

Babylon was the Rome of early eastern civilization. Its greatness continued until the fall of the Assyrian empire before the Persian conqueror, Cyrus, in 538 B. C. While Cyrus treated the Babylonian religion with statesmanlike respect, it soon fell into decay, and thus passed one of the great spiritual inspirations of the ages. But the culture, the arts and the literature of the Babylonians carried on and much of it was redeemed by the Greeks, whose glory began to rise over the lengthening shadows of the great Babylonian civilization.

Were it not for the care exercised by these people who built temples to endure, our knowledge of this great and wonderful past would not have been spared to us. Their temples served the purpose for which they were conceived. They "carried on" the word of their gods as we hope the word of our God will live through the edifices we erect today. Can we compare our work, in beauty and endurance, with that of these early worshipers of Marduk? And is the comparison favorable?



The Glory of the Temple in Egypt, Greece and Rome

CHAPTER TWO

BEFORE we engage upon the building of our church edifices, or decide upon their interior adornment, we should know something of the great inspirations out of which the theologies of the past took form and how reverence for the Unseen became exemplified, as it is today in the churches in which we worship. In the preceding chapter we touched upon the forces and motives which prevailed upon early man to seek something to which he might anchor his spiritual beliefs. As these beliefs developed, man also developed his expression of them in his temples, in his ceremonies, in his reverence for the dead. The first temple building centered in an age by itself in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece and Rome.

EGYPT

The religion of the Land of the Nile was essentially one of peace. The temple was always a sacred and mysterious place. Within known times, no human sacrifice defiled the Egyptian temple, and offerings of animals to the gods were few. The oldest theology of a future life appears to have originated among these people, who had a most profound reverence for the dead and preserved the bodies of the departed so perfectly that to this day we may gaze upon the life-like features of some of the early pharaohs. In general, the worship of the Egyptians was lighter and happier than that of the Sumerians and Babylonians, these people being the first of whom we know to use the dance in religious ceremonies.

View of Ancient Philae, Egypt

Many dancers became sacred to the temple, and it is the belief of some historians that from this custom came the later Vestals, or "sacred women," found in the temples of Egypt, Greece and Rome.

The Egyptian priesthood was a highly educated and segregated sacerdotal body that always stood between the gods and the people. The priests conducted the schools at which the princes and rulers were educated, and they were the source of almost all learning and enlightenment. They became very powerful during the course of centuries and scarcely anything was undertaken without consulting them. Naturally, the priests were wealthy, as they not only were privileged to levy a heavy tax on all the people but were rewarded handsomely by those whom they aided or who sought their advice.

The investiture of all public officers, from the coronation of the king to the taking of office by a tax collector, was a temple function. Such occasions usually called for feasting and rejoicing. Then there were numerous festivals to the equally numerous gods, and it is interesting to note here that many of these deities took the form of animals, and still others, among them the most powerful, had animal heads. At the festivals the temples were profusely decorated with branches of tamarisk, reed grass and an abundance of flowers. Tables were spread with food and drink for the priesthood and nobles, and bread, cakes and fruits were served to the people. On such occasions everyone received flowers, which were carefully preserved and added to the funeral effects of the recipient.

A part of the temple life of the Egyptians were the mysteries, or sacred orders. It is on account of the secrecy with which these mysteries were surrounded that, with all the literature on the subject, we know so little of their origin. Even Herodotus and other Greek writers respect these mysteries to a point of avoiding any discussion of them. The secret orders appear to have been open to all, in varying degrees of castes and classes, from the king to the visiting outlander. Many of the rituals, practices and teachings of these orders find their counterpart in the modern secret societies. Solomon, in all probability, applied in the building of his temple the Egyptian system of apprenticeship, fellowcraft and master building, out of which has grown the great order of Freemasonry of our time.

Egyptian theology seems to have followed, or possibly preceded, the general belief of early peoples in a supreme being who once occupied the earth, became king of the land and applied himself to the betterment of his subjects. As their religion was thus of such a high order, it is but natural that their temples should have been also of the highest architectural beauty and most gorgeously furnished. With the Egyptians, temple building was a serious and a sacred work and it was entrusted to those who were qualified. Their temples survive in all their exterior splendor. Their pyramids, abodes of dead rulers, are probably the oldest buildings of considerable size upon this earth. The interior decorations of the houses of worship, of course, have long since disappeared, but we know they were rich and ornate and the ultimate expression of beauty according to the Egyptian standard of art.

Egypt was a pioneer in all the arts and the source of much of human progress. Her civilization, ever more or less of a mystery to later times, continued for several thousand years before the birth of Christ, and it began to decay about the time of the exodus of the Hebrews. Egypt finally fell before the Roman legions and became a slowly decaying principality of the empire. Literature received its most grievous wound when the Mohammedans, soon after the death of the prophet, captured Alexandria and burned its famous library.

But Egypt must ever be held in esteem by all mankind, on account of the high quality of her spiritual beliefs, and because of her advancement in the arts and sciences, literature, mathematics, astronomy, geography, agriculture and statecraft. Egypt will ever be held in veneration on account of the beauty and the magnificence of her temples and the sincerity in which those temples were erected. The Land of the Nile gave birth to a civilization that joined the spiritual and the material in a bond of beauty and endurance, from which we may well borrow in the erection and equipment of our temples of worship.

Decoration Showing Combined Use of Lotus and Papyrus

GREECE

There is no greater phenomenon in the history of mankind than the rise within a few centuries of the Greeks from a nomadic, warring tribespeople to a civilization as yet unparalleled in beauty of thought and expression. Their creative instincts were free and untrammeled. Noble

The Zeus of Phidias in the Temple of Olympus at Elis, Greece

thinking, progressive ideals, searching for the truth in all contacts, fitted them for an expression of these virtues in everything to which they turned their thought and hands. Philosophy and poetry, stripped of the superstitions of the past, yet filled with religious animation; respect for law and order and for the rights of others; democracy of a form, the rights of the individual before the law—all of these attributes of culture and refinement issue forth from the brief period during which Greece flowered, through and out of her magnificent temples, through and out of her manifold arts and sciences and out of a sincerity of purpose which reached from the humblest man to the very gods themselves.

To this day we derive our guiding impulse in symmetry and orderliness in design from the Greeks as they classified architecture in the building of their temples, and so also do we trace modern interior decorations, colorings, woods, seats and pews to the enrichment of the late classical temple and the early Christian church.

More than any temple builders of olden times, the Greeks used the column, the isolated supports of the roof, the beams, the cornices, the paneled friezes.. Nearly all Greek architecture is built around the column, of which there were originally two orders, the Doric and Ionic, but to which was added in later times the Corinthian. As the Greeks lived so largely in the open air, their temples possessed many characteristics which are not adaptable to our climate.

Of the early Greeks we know little, except through the Homeric poems. Their religion was the outgrowth of legendary worship. It was a happy, a cheerful religion, and the people enjoyed their worship. Their gods were the protectors of the good, the avengers of evil and upholders of the moral law. This religion was practical, and the Greeks took it into their battles, into their daily lives and into their social and economic relations. Many of their outstanding families traced their ancestry to the amours of gods with mortals. This established an intimacy between gods and men that obtained in no other country.

Though from the cradle to the grave every event in the life of the Greek had some religious significance, there arose no priestly caste or sacerdotal hierarchy. The priesthood was a part of the citizenry, sustaining with other forces the national ideals and diffusing, with the philosopher and teacher, the culture and morality of the times. The

Greek prayed standing and could offer his own sacrifices, participate in ceremonials and rites and administer his own spiritual comforts. He was a firm believer in signs, prophecies and omens. His religious rites consisted largely of festivals, sacrifices and tributes to his gods.

The Greeks became the supreme architects, sculptors, artists and builders of ancient times. Artistically, we have never been able to transcend their work. They excelled all peoples as temple builders. Perfect architecturally, their temples were embellished by the noblest works of their sculptors and painters and erected by craftsmen who were themselves artists.

The most exquisite temple of all time was the Parthenon, at Athens. This crowning achievement in Greek classical art was built upon the Acropolis during that period of Athenian history when temple building was mankind's eloquent tribute to its gods. Man has built many temples to his various and devious deities, but none that in beauty and spirit excelled those of Pericles and his architects, Ictinus and Callicrates. The Parthenon was designed by Ictinus and is believed to have been completed in the year 438 B. C. It was dedicated to Athena Parthenos, the patron goddess of Athens, and contained a gold and ivory statue of her, said to have been the work of Phidias.

The Parthenon and the other Greek temples were not the works of a man nor the children of an idea. They were not happenstances, nor accidents. They arose like a fragrant cluster of perfect flowers out of the spiritual and intellectual soil of the times. They reflected the dreams, the ideals, the life of a great people free in mind and soul, just as your church edifice represents, or should represent, the combined urge of your community or society to reach the best, the most elevating, the most inspiring.

Why can we not today, with infinitely larger opportunities, with more to work with and thousands of years of examples before us, evolve an age equal to or superior to that of classical Greece? You will find your answer to that question, reader, when you are planning, or deciding upon, the design or architecture of your church and the elegance and taste with which it is to be furnished. That church occupies the same relation to our civilization that the Greek temple did to the golden era of its wonderful creators. We know that these wonders were fruits of

Greek Stele

The Vestals of Rome Tending the Altar Fires

thought, of sincerity. We know that they represented the ideals of the time. We know that before the Parthenon was built, Pericles and his master minds had a plan. We know that the plan contemplated beauty and endurance. They built not alone for their own day, but for all the time to come. Perhaps it is the absence of that thought, that faith in the things that survive, that makes us careless builders. Perhaps that is why we cannot excel the Greeks, or even equal them. The place to begin to do that is where they began—with the temple.

ROME

We cannot say of Rome what we have said of Greece. Rome's grandeur was borrowed from all parts of the civilized world of her time, and particularly from Greece. Her religion was borrowed, as was her philosophy and many of her economic institutions. But, the noblest borrower of them all, Rome converted her borrowings into distinctive Roman achievements. Her temples, manifestly Greek in spirit, were Roman in fact. She was mistress of both the spiritual and the material world, and as such she made over both heaven and earth.

Rome's temple history begins long before the city was builded upon the seven hills. The temple entered Italy through Sicily, many years before Horatio defended the bridge against Lars Porsena, with whom disappeared most traces of Etruscan, or pre-Roman, influence in Italy. Temples in Italy were flourishing long before Pericles built the Parthenon, centuries before Socrates, Plato or Alexander. Ere the Romans took Greece and the Greeks themselves, they took the temples of the Hellenes along with the gods to whom they were erected.

On the desolate, malaria infested coastal plains south of Naples and Salerno is a little wayside stopping place called Pesto. Here existed, 600 years before the Christian era, a mighty city called Poseidonia, so named from the Greek god Poseidon. The Romans called the place Pastum. Here you will find in a splendid state of preservation three of the most notable remains of Greek temple art. One of these, the temple of Poseidon, is said by many scholars to rival the Parthenon.

It was out of Paestum and the numerous Greek settlements along the east and west coasts of Italy, out of Sicily and the islands of the Mediterranean and the Adriatic, that Rome derived much of her culture, her

theology and her knowledge of the fine arts, which possessions she later fortified with the importation from Greece of artists and artisans who aided her in making her Forum and Capitoline the temple triumph of the centuries. Like Greece, Rome paid her highest tribute to her gods. They came first.

We have been taught that Rome was pagan. Yes, but her paganism was as sincere as it related to her spiritual life as are our beliefs of today. If we are to compare by what she left, it was more sincere. Both the Roman and the Greek built constructively. Their worship found expression only in the best and the noblest. Their theology became a part of their everyday life. Every household had a favorite god. Roman wayside shrines are still a source of delight to the traveler in Italy, in France, in Spain, even in England. Wherever he went, the Roman took his gods with him. Many of our Christian institutions, like Christmas, May Day, Thanksgiving and harvest festivals, we have received or revamped from festivals to the Roman gods.

It was not surprising, therefore, to find the Roman in the days of Augustus enjoying a comfortable understanding of worship. He understood the beauty of his temples and the significance of their purpose in the Forum. The Temple of Vesta, in which was kept the sacred fire and the relics upon which depended the very existence of the state, was the Holy of Holies to the Roman. Time and again it was burned or destroyed, and time and again it rose from its ashes more beautiful and more sublime. The temple of Saturn, on a slope of Capitoline Hill, built upon the site of the ancient altar to the patron god of Italy, was a lofty, inspiring structure which kept alive the earliest traditions of the Roman people. Beauty was worshiped in the temple of Venus, which crowned the classic environs of the Palatium at the southern rise of Palatine hill. Near the road leading to the Palatine stood the temple of Jupiter Strator, the Roman Zeus, famed in Roman legend as having originally been built by Romulus during the Sabine wars.

Roman Wayside Shrine

The temple of Fortuna Virilis was a shrine at which the Roman paid his respects and made his devotions. An ardent courtier of fortune, he attempted no enterprise of moment without proper sacrifices to the goddess of good will. Thus he ever and always linked his material life with that of his gods, ever taking them into his confidence, ever implor-

The Roman Praying

ing their aid and protection. Testifying to this fact was the temple of Concordia, built by Camillus as a symbol of the restored amity between the patricians and plebeians.

The architecture of these temples varied between the three Greek orders—Doric, Ionic and Corinthian—and the Etruscan. Out of these the Roman evolved another order known as the Composite. Many of the Roman temples had magnificent enclosures and courts, partly to shield them from the crowds and partly to enrich them with a proper setting. In addition to the temples erected to the principal deities were numerous sanctuaries, altars and shrines. Some of these temples were round, others hexagonal or octagonal. The Roman altar was profusely ornate, its embellishment usually representing the personality of the god or goddess to whom it was dedicated. In one important detail Roman temple architecture differed from that of the Greek, and that was in the use of the vault.

Though unpretentious in private life, in his worship the Roman, like all ancients, was ostentatious. The priests and priestesses enjoyed many rights and privileges not accorded to either the public or public servants. The early kings also held the office of "sacrificial king," but with the change to the republic this office was given to a priest.

The priesthood of Rome was composed of a college of pontifices, around which centered the public worship. The college pronounced annually the vows of the state, and acted generally as mediator between the public and the gods. The pontifices were assisted by the sacrificial priests, or flamines. Then there were the vestals and the augures and several priestly colleges, all with special temple functions.

The Roman prayed to the gods of the upper world standing, his arms raised towards the east. To the gods of the nether world he bowed or knelt. His sacrifices consisted for the most part of domestic animals, from among the best and most perfect that could be produced. The sacrificial rites were not as elaborate as among the Egyptians and Babylonians, but in some instances more involved than were those of the Greeks. In keeping with the oldest of customs, the dead received probably more ceremonial consideration than did the living. The Romans cremated their dead.

In this brief and sketchy outline of the worship and spiritual life of

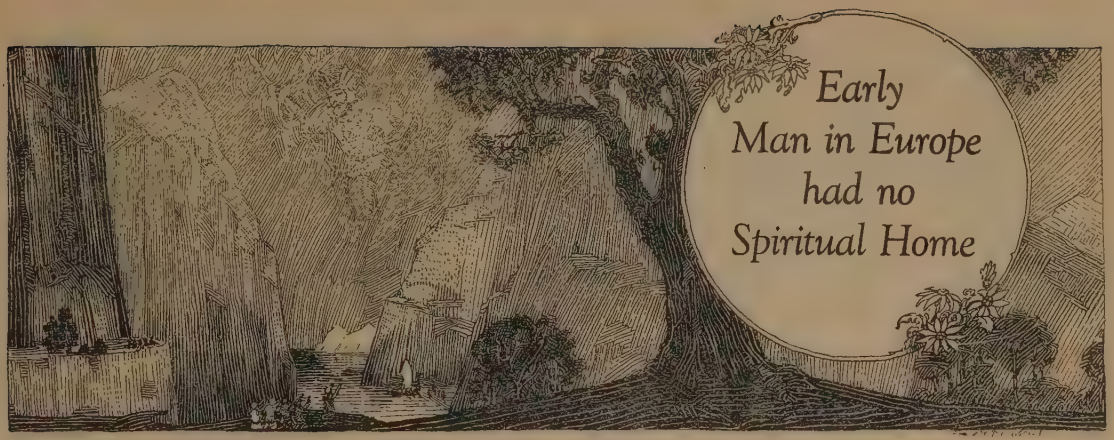
the Roman, we are of necessity limited to its most significant details. No period in history has earned a greater recognition in literature than that covered by the flight of the twelve eagles. Rome, says Showerman, was "a great failure and a great success." She has been the subject of countless speculations, eloquently praised and bitterly censured by writers of twenty centuries. But, good or bad, she left us many noble examples and contributed by far more to our civilization than we could have returned had she lived today and participated in world affairs. But, as some forms of life must die to give birth to new life, Rome died in the labor of birth—the birth of a new thought, a new light and a new hope. The mistress of the earth became the mistress of the soul and for centuries was destined to guide the Christian church through the storms and vicissitudes of a dark and dismal age.

Consider for the moment, reader, the change that has come over our civilization. Few and far between are the church edifices to which we, as the Romans in their temples, give "rich marble decoration," to use the words of the poet Horace. Few and far between are the houses of worship built to endure. Scarce and scarcer are becoming the works of enduring art designed to meet the needs of our spiritual lives.

Assume that the Egyptians, the Greeks and the Romans had built their temples on a monetary basis, sought the cheapest, the quickest; assume that their impulses had come from the "lowest bidder," rather than from the triumphs of performance. Would we now be emulating them? Would we be looking back to them for guidance? Would we be thrilled and charmed by this pulsating romance that crept out of the myths of Babylonia and Egypt, through the walls of Troy and into the heart of Rome? Will others write of our worship, our churches, our church furniture, five thousand, three thousand, yes, one thousand years from now, as we are writing of theirs? Will posterity in coming milleniums find chairs like that which was preserved to us from the theater of Dionysus at Athens and around the design of which we still build our own chairs and pews?

Early Temple Builders

We can build religious edifices that will compare with those glorious temples of the pagans. But the building must be done by the many, not by the few. It must be done not alone with hands but with souls, with the spirit, with understanding. We have the means, the art, the wealth, the opportunity. Have we the will?



CHAPTER THREE

AS WE lower the curtain on the last great scenes of the ancient world, let us briefly turn back to the pages of its *arcana celesta* as it was written over the black forests of Central Europe, the ice of the north, the sunny slopes of the Pyrenees and the dank and foggy moors of England. Early man in Europe left us but little from which to judge of his spiritual past. He kept no records, built no temples. His arts were few and crude, yet in point of antiquity as old, if not older, than were the arts and crafts of Mesopotamia and Egypt. All that he left us were his bones, his implements of warfare, crude domestic utensils and a few scratches on the walls of his caves and shelters.

Comparing his story with that of the temple builders, how eloquent is the proof that man is not sufficient unto himself! So great is the antiquity of man in Europe, that we must turn for our information to the record of the rocks, to strata long since hidden by the accumulations of time. And yet, we find in these accumulations little or no trace of the spiritual urge that is reflected in every phase of the early civilizations of the East. Early man in Europe worshiped gods, to be sure, but it was a worship of fear. He did not credit his deities with an intelligence that would appreciate or understand the meaning of stately temples or beautiful interiors. He had no pride of personal achievement in perfection or endurance. Somehow, he did not take his gods into his daily life. From

The North People Dwelt in Caves Left by the Receding Glaciers

what little we have gleaned of his spiritual life, his religion was a system of taboos and superstitions on a par with the traditions and customs existing today among the barbarian and savage tribes. He had nothing to dedicate, nothing visible to enjoy, nothing to which he could point and say: "I built that for my God."

When you build your church, bear that in mind. Bear in mind that man lived in Europe for upwards of fifty thousand years and possessed a conscious sense of the existence of a supreme being, before he realized that not until he expressed that consciousness in a tangible way could he derive any benefit or comfort from his worship. While fifty millenniums should suffice to impress us with the tremendous urge of the spiritual in the human race, we are confronted with the fact that in those fifty thousand years man in Western Europe did not progress as fast as did the Egyptian, the Assyrian or the Greek in five hundred years after he had built his first temple to his gods.

Having no temples, ancient Europe had no homes, for the two are inseparable companions. We are safe in assuming that early European man worshiped natural phenomena and animals. Drawings in color of reindeer and bison have been found in the caves of the Pyrenees. They are said to have been done in a very remote period. The seed of worship was working, but it was not cultivated; it had no ground in which to grow, no nourishment. Temples and churches are the gardens in which worship is nourished. And the prehistoric European was not a builder.

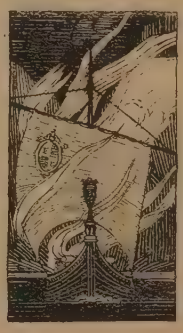
But what he lacked in building he made up in fantasy. The godheads of the Greeks gradually worked westward. They may have come with the Aryan invasion, or they may have been conveyed by the roving Vikings, whose sagas teem with praise of a "valorous nation conceived by the gods." Even when Greece was a memory, but before the introduction of Christianity, the exiled Frithiof pleaded with his beloved to accompany him to the seas and islands of Greece, where formerly dwelt

A mighty race and gods in marble temples.
There we will build among the waves
A Northland, fairer than this,
And with our faithful loves
Fill the airy temple halls and tribute pay
To their deserted gods.

The charms of Norse and German mythology, in which is related the worship of the ancients, have not held the interest of students as much as did its close resemblance to the Greek and the manner in which it reached almost to the polar circle of Sweden and Norway and was firmly rooted there when Christianity arrived. The principal sources of our information are the sagas and myths, hopelessly intermingled with the creation of the world, with the flood, Babylon, the Siege of Troy, and with the great epochs of the Eastern world. So popular became the theory that the Teutonic peoples were descendants from the Trojans that at one time in Europe it was as common to trace one's ancestry to Troy as it is today for some Americans to boast of a Mayflower lineage.

At all events, the early Northern European god system was Greek. Odin, said by some to correspond to Jupiter, by others to Hermes, was the protecting deity of the good world. Balder was their Apollo, Tor their Mars, Freja their Aphrodite. Loke was the evil spirit, corresponding to the Greek Pluto, and it was through his Mephistophelean offices that Balder was killed, which presaged the downfall of the Asa gods. Valhall, sometimes called Asgard, was heaven; Niffeljhelm, hades. To some extent this theology had its classified deities and special gods for special things, but not the completeness existing in the theologies of Babylonia, Egypt and Greece. Worship and sacrifices were conducted in groves and under conditions already described. The dead were buried in mounds, with much respect. Included in the accoutrements of the dead were often the things with which they were associated in life. Oftentimes the warrior's living horse was entombed with his departed master. Seafaring men, when they became old and unable to follow the sea, frequently staged their own end by erecting a funeral pyre on the deck of their "drakskepp" and letting the vessel drift to sea in a storm, at the mercy of wind and wave. Once out on the waves they fired the ship and gloriously joined Allfather in Valhall. Next to victory upon land or sea, to join the gods in Valhall was the Norseman's dream of all that encompassed life and death.

The Body of the Chief Carried to Sea by His Flaming "Drakskepp"



But as we go further south in Europe romance fades and we enter upon a different type of worship and a diametrically opposite concept of theology. The dreariest, and to our culture the most oppressive of all forms of religious belief or worship, was that of the Druids. Where it

came from no one seems to know or care. The Druids were an order—a semi-public and religious sect—and constituted the priesthood of Britain and Gaul before the days of the Roman empire. Human sacrifices and repelling rites and ceremonies were a part of their practices. They believed that life was immortal, dealt in astrology, soothsaying and in the occult arts. Caesar considered them a body of some note and dignity, but Strabo and Diodorus maintain that they were for the most part soothsayers and necromancers. They worshiped in caves and groves, deeply surrounded by mystery and occultism, and were finally expelled from Britain and Gaul by Roman and later Christian authorities.

Egypt had a Book of the Dead. In reality, it was a book of the dead for the living. Early Europe's Book of the Dead was a book for the dead. No matter how closely or patiently we read it, we find little that stirs the soul as compared with the remarkable achievements of the ancients of the East. Temples and edifices there were none. A few ruins exist here and there, like those at Stonehenge, England, that tell of feeble attempts to worship God in stone, but they fade beside the masterpieces of splendor that came out of the hands and souls throughout the Mediterranean East. Europe had nothing to show for its worship over the ages, and likewise little to show for its progress.

The Early Druids Made Human Sacrifices

CHAPTER FOUR

IT IS FITTING that the light of Christianity should have emanated from a star. The light of the star is the smallest, the clearest and purest that illuminates the earth. It is a light cheering and inspiring the lowly and the mighty. The ancient shepherds on the grassy slopes of the Himalayas, long before Babylon set out to conquer the earth, watched their flocks at night under the light of the stars. These untutored shepherds thought the stars were the eyes of an unseen but all-seeing, omnipresent god, the windows of a great soul. And so it was ominous that the light of the stars should fall upon the manger, upon the humble place of nativity of Him who should become The Light of the World.

In these reflections there is no place for a discourse on theology, or for even the most rudimentary analysis of religion. The enduring literature of all times has had a religious background; the legendary and recorded histories of the race have dealt with man's relations to his gods. We are here limited to the visible in man's worship and to those frail evidences of his spiritual devotion that pale before the greatness of the soul itself.

If the light of Christianity reached us through the rays of a star it should find its brightest and clearest reflection in the church edifice. What is the church if not the starlight of Christendom? Dotting the world like a myriad of stars on a clear night, the church structure is an

The Powerful Emperor Bowed Before the All-Powerful

answer to the Star of Bethlehem. How clearly it shines depends upon how carefully we build. Seen through a telescope, the star gives forth well defined rays of light. Each ray is perfect. Likewise should the rays of light emanating from a church be perfect in their testimony to our faith, our hope and our skill.

Our attitude toward the churches we build is the barometer of the altitude of our souls, no matter what our beliefs may be. Our churches can rise in beauty and attractiveness no higher than our faith, our belief and the sincerity of our convictions. The stone and mortar and wood in our religious edifices signify nothing unless they define the honesty of the intent of our devotions. Our church equipment may have the comforts of a palace and the purest enrichment of the ecclesiastic arts, but have no meaning unless the spirit is lofty and the soul compassionate.

The Christian church was born in Jerusalem, cradled at Antioch and matured at Rome. It was the gift of Asia to Europe, to all mankind. It was the ante-mortem—almost posthumous—offspring of an expiring age. Paganism, Roman civilization, were alike doomed, and as they breathed the death-gasp the Star of Bethlehem arose. Christianity was a "beginning again"—the inauguration of a new and a better rule of life, a clearer interpretation of justice and righteousness, a simpler code of conduct, the break of the day of love and sympathy. The Sermon on the Mount tore away the veil from the mysteries of Isis and Osiris, clarified the ambiguous teachings of pagan philosophy and tempered with mercy and forbearance the harshness of the old moral code. It enthroned the soul in the heart of man. It revealed the God, Father of all, whom man could love more than fear, the God man could conceive of in his everyday thought, express in his everyday act and worship with pride and in humility. All this should be revealed in the church structure, all this should be spoken in the wood which forms a part of its adornment.

When the many-tongued Apostles and the Disciples spread the Gospel of Jesus of Nazareth unto all the ends of the earth, there was an awakening of mankind, a rebirth of the race. The new faith in the One True God was accepted eagerly by the lowly, the meek in spirit, to whom that glorious Sermon on the Mount was addressed. The divine courage of these first humble followers of the Nazarene broke down the obstinacy of ruling classes. The powerful emperor bowed before the All Powerful.

Soon the new religion swept aside all the old idolatrous cults and men of many races in Asia, Europe and Africa accepted and worshiped the one God. To Him they built altars, to worship Him fittingly they gathered in the places of worship, either transforming the old pagan temples into Christian meeting places or erecting new edifices. In gratitude they gave of their wealth to the House of God, and with this wealth they embellished the House of God until often it rivaled the pagan temples in the beauty and richness of its architecture, adornments and embellishments. The pagan temple gave way to the Christian church.

The word "church" is derived from the Greek "Lord's (house)." It is similarly spelled and pronounced in many languages, no doubt because it was almost simultaneously introduced to the European peoples during the early Christian centuries. In Swedish "church" is *Kyrka;* in Danish, *Kirke;* Scottish, *Kirk;* German, *Kirche;* Russian, *Tserkov;* Bulgarian, *Cerkova;* Czechoslovakian, *Cirkev;* Finnish, *Kirkko.* Originally, church was the word applying to buildings erected or used for worship and it appears very early in the sacred writings and ecclesiastical correspondence. The word "church," as meaning the house of worship or the "Lord's house," soon became applied to the assembly and to the whole aggregation of the faithful.

Thus we have the Roman Catholic church, the Greek Orthodox church, the Church of England, the Methodist Episcopal, the Baptist, the Presbyterian, the Congregational, the Christian Science and numerous other churches. Today the word "church" has both a spiritual and a material meaning, being applicable to the faithful as a whole or to the humblest shelter designed or adapted for spiritual devotions.

The Early Christians Were Continually Persecuted

As their Master was despised and persecuted, so the early Christians were scorned and oppressed, first by the Jews of Asia Minor, then by the emperors of Rome, and they worshiped God in remote places. The Christian church came into being under the light of the stars. The meetings of the Apostles and their followers were held in secluded homes, in secret and abandoned shelters, in the ruins of temples and palaces, wherever the watchful eyes of their implacable foes would be unlikely to see them. There was an added reason for this aloofness and concealment. The early church confidently expected the second coming of Christ. Worldly matters were of small concern to the first Christians, who observed a quick

Paul Was a Missionary, An Organizer, a Master

dissolution of the old order in the upheavals which followed close upon the crucifixion of the Master—the fall of Jerusalem, the restlessness of the barbarians and the decay of Greek and Roman institutions.

The Christian church, founded in Palestine, preserved many of the characteristics of the Jewish religion, adopted the Jewish institutions and for some time numbered its followers mainly among the Jews. We owe the universality of Christianity to the Apostle Paul. To him also we owe much that is purely visible in the Christian church—its edifices, its arts, its ceremonials. Paul freed the church from its Hebraic conservatism. He was a missionary, an organizer, a master. To him was given the great light, the vision. He recognized in Jesus more than the Jewish Messiah. To Paul, Jesus was not merely the Expected One of the Jews but the Light of the World, the Teacher of a new religion which was to take form in both the inner and the outer man and which was to unite all the nations in one holy impulse.

Paul encouraged the early Christian societies to build meeting places. He may be said to be the father of the visible Christian church. The first actual House of Worship is believed to have been erected at Antioch, an ancient city of Asia Minor, which by reason of its Greek and Roman influence and its comparative political freedom became a strategic center for the dissemination of the word of God. Paul visited there (Acts XII: 14-XIV:21), and it was the starting point of his first missionary journey. At Antioch the followers of the Nazarene were first called Christians, and there many of the forms and ceremonies of the new faith were inaugurated.

As at that time all roads led to Rome, Christianity soon found its way to the home of the Caesars. For some time the faithful in the Eternal City met secretly in the homes of the lowly who accepted the Christ. Rome was loth to invade the home. A law-abiding citizen was safe there. But growing Christianity was not content to remain sequestered. It was an uplifting faith that required expression. Its proselytes soon became known and, refusing to accord divinity to the emperor, paid in full the price of defiance—death. We cannot review here the struggles, the sufferings, the horrors of the succeeding decades. That story has been told countless times. It is the most graphic and gripping story in the annals of civilized, yet brutal, man. There were times when the Christians and

ST. AGNES ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH,
CLEVELAND, OHIO
THE FIRST REAL BASILICAN TYPE IN THE LOMBARDY
STYLE IN THE UNITED STATES

ST. JOHN ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH,
CLEVELAND, OHIO
THE FIRST REAL AMERICAN TYPE IN THE LOMBARDY
ST. LIE IN THE UNITED STATES.

the Christian religion seemed to be doomed to extinction, and it was not until the reign of Constantine I, early in the fourth century, that freedom was granted the Christians to practice their devotions. Approximately a century later, under Theodosius I, Christianity became the official religion of the Roman empire and heathenism was outlawed. And here begins the history of the church edifice as we know it today.

The first churches or meeting places of the Christians of Rome were in the catacombs, where to this day we find ruins of their shrines. There was no attempt then, and for centuries after, to reorganize temple architecture and adapt it to Christian church purposes. The form of the church arose from its physical requirements. But no matter how small the church, or where located, this form appears to have been adhered to from the formative days of the Christian organization. In the first century Pope Clement, in the second book of "Constitutions," directs that "the church be of a long shape, like a ship, facing the east." In Rome, however, this orientation was difficult to obtain on account of the location and styles of temples and public buildings which the Christians took over. Here enters the "basilica."

According to Eusebius, it is altogether probable that Constantine erected the first Christian churches, or basilicas in Rome, in his Lateran and Vatican palaces. Then the secret crypts and meeting places in the catacombs, the desert shelters and the forest sanctuaries blossomed forth into day, and in almost full bloom. Christian churches were built in all parts of the Roman empire. During the four centuries of oppression and exile the liturgic rites and ceremonies of the church had become well defined. Mass had long been celebrated.

The First Meeting Places of the Christians were in the Catacombs

The basilica constituted then, as now, the main structural body of the church. The word is a Latinized adjective from the Greek, meaning "royal." Originally the basilica was a building used by merchants, by litigants and by persons engaged in the public service. In a large sense the word was applied to any hall or auditorium for public gatherings for any purpose. What little is known of the original basilica comes to us from the writings of Vitruvius, a Roman architect and author of the reign of Augustus. His description corresponds quite faithfully with what we know to have been the general form and dimensions of the three most famous Roman basilicas, St. Peter, St. Paul and St. John Lateran. While

From the Days of the Apostles Christians Knelt in Prayer

the originals long since were removed or destroyed, drawings and descriptions give us a comprehensive idea of the early sanctuaries of the Christian church. St. Peter's was dismantled in the sixteenth century to be replaced by the present magnificent structure. The basilica of St. Paul, dedicated A. D. 324, and rebuilt in 388 in plan and dimensions almost identical with St. Peter's, was nearly destroyed by fire in 1823. St. John Lateran has been so rebuilt and modernized as to have almost entirely lost its original contour and detail.

In the Roman basilica was laid the groundwork for the interior enrichment of the church. The doors and much of the woodwork were profusely carved and the interiors were enriched with splendid mosaics of cut marble, figures of Christ and statues of saints, popes and apostles. Ornate chandeliers and candelabra, gold and silver vessels, gorgeous vestments and magnificent processionals soon added color and dignity to early Christian worship. Monks appear as early as the third century. From the days of the Apostles, Christians knelt in prayer. The younger Pliny informed Trajan that the faithful at Antioch assembled at daybreak to sing hymns in honor of Christ, whom they worshiped as God. Hence, we know that the grandeur of the early Christian church was enlivened by song and music. Though lacking in the architectural refinement that characterized its pagan surroundings, there was no lack in the Christian church of the ceremonies and the pomp so dear to the heart of the Roman. In the Roman, as well as in the churches of Italy, France, Spain, Africa and the east, the worshipers recited audibly a form of prayers and chants, a custom as old as Egypt and Sumeria. Many of these forms and ceremonies came from the ancient world. Many of the church customs, holy orders and priesthoods were revised copies of ancient forms and practices.

But filling it all with a sublime inspiration was the memory of Him to whom even the stars paid homage. The Star of Bethlehem had taken on the luster of the rising sun and was spreading light and warmth throughout all the then known world. The light all too soon was eclipsed, and there came a profound darkness which endured for centuries. But in the darkness, the church, blindly at times and again with inner vision, groped towards the new day of light and prepared for a rebirth of glory and enlightenment.

Lessons in Church-Building from the Middle Ages

CHAPTER FIVE

CHRISTIANITY gave three virtues to church building, which in our material times are often in danger of being forgotten. They were Purity, Spiritual Beauty and Comfort. Without the presence of these, your church, stately or imposing as it otherwise may be, will not bring you what you seek—spiritual and physical repose. With the coming of Christ, there is a distinct change in the purpose of worship as practiced in the temple or church. The Christion peoples realized, although indistinctly at first, that God is love, that though He is just He is charitable, forgiving and fatherly. How manifest is this spiritual awakening in the architecture and interior furnishings of the early Christian churches. No sooner had the Christians emerged from their sequestered shelters, from the catacombs and other underground meeting places, than their churches began to take the form of the living word. No sooner were the bans removed than the church began to take to itself, as all temple building had done in the past, the best that the arts had to offer, plus purity, spiritual beauty, comfort and endurance. The great cathedrals of Rome are in form, if not in reality, as they were in the time of Constantine, only enriched by all that the arts could contribute through the progress of the centuries. The results of this early church building are apparent to this day in our culture and social and moral progress.

The Majesty of the Gothic Architecture

Before we set out to erect our modern houses of worship, it is well that we should know about the origin of the architecture and interior embellishment of our churches. As our laws and customs are derived from precedent, so are our churches built according to the principles and experiences of the past. As the orders of architecture are largely based upon the column, so is the style of our church structures based upon an orderly precedent. All the information we require when we set out to erect a new church has been gathered by industrious students and is available for the seeker after knowledge.

The orders of church building, if we can call them orders, are few in number and easily distinguished. First came a period of transition from pagan to Christian architecture. This period continued in Southern and Western Europe during the first nine hundred or one thousand years of the Christian era. Then enters the Romanesque, which continued until about the thirteenth century. Simultaneously there developed in the East what is known as the Byzantine school or style of church architecture. Combined, these two distinct concepts of church construction and beauty paved the way for what we know as the Gothic and which has been commonly accepted by the Christian peoples as reflecting in harmony and beauty the atmosphere and philosophy communicated to the world by the Saviour of Mankind.

When the Christian architects adopted the basilica as the model for their churches, they laid the foundation of what we know as the Romanesque style in the structural and decorative arts. The space in the basilica formerly occupied by the *tribuna* they allotted to the priests. The tribuna also was known as the *concha* or apse. In its new use it became known as the *presbyterium,* or seat of the priests. In this space was erected the altar, over the grave of a martyr, and over this arose a baldachina—the *ciborium*—which could be closed in with curtains. Against the wall of the tribuna, and behind the altar, were arranged the seats of the clergy, with the raised throne of the bishop in the center. In front of the altar the columns, which in the ancient basilica had separated the hall of judgment from the tribuna, were removed in order that the people might have an uninterrupted view of the altar. And the large central space, which became the nave, was covered with a roof. The aisles, one and

sometimes two on each side of the nave and separated by columns from the nave, also were used by the faithful.

One of the first developments in the early Christian church was the enlargement of the presbyterium. The extra space for the priests was secured by the formation of a transept between the apse and the nave, extending the whole breadth of nave and aisle, and sometimes even beyond them. In this wise the early churches were given the form of the cross. The entrance was at the end of the nave opposite the altar. Here a porch with a court—the *atrium*—was added. In the midst of this court arose the fountain, where the faithful upon entering sprinkled themselves in token of purification. The fountain is the origin of the vase of holy water still to be found at the entrances of modern Roman Catholic churches.

At first little effort was made to embellish the exteriors of the churches, but some of them were imposing on account of their very simplicity. But the interiors, embellished by splendid columns and often with mosaics, were rich and sometimes magnificent. Decorations were lavished especially upon the triumphal arch, which formed the end of the nave at the transept. Outstanding examples in Rome of the basilica were the ancient church of St. Peter, founded by Constantine; St. Paul's church outside the walls, St. Maria Maggiore, St. Agnese, St. Lorenzo, St. Clement and St. Prassede. Another fine example was the basilica St. Apollinare at Ravenna, which was one of the first Italian churches to have a bell tower. For some years the tower of the Italian churches stood by the side of the church.

Baptismal Font in Munnerstadt on the Lauen

THE BYZANTINE CHURCH

During the reign of Constantine the seat of empire was removed from Rome to Byzantium, renamed Constantinople. Christianity followed the emperor, and new churches began to arise in the new capital. The basilica form was used, but slowly changes developed in the East. One of the first modifications was the placing of galleries over the side aisles, the upper stories being used for the women—a consequence of Oriental manners. Soon other changes were made in outer and inner structure and we find the growth of a distinct style known as the By-

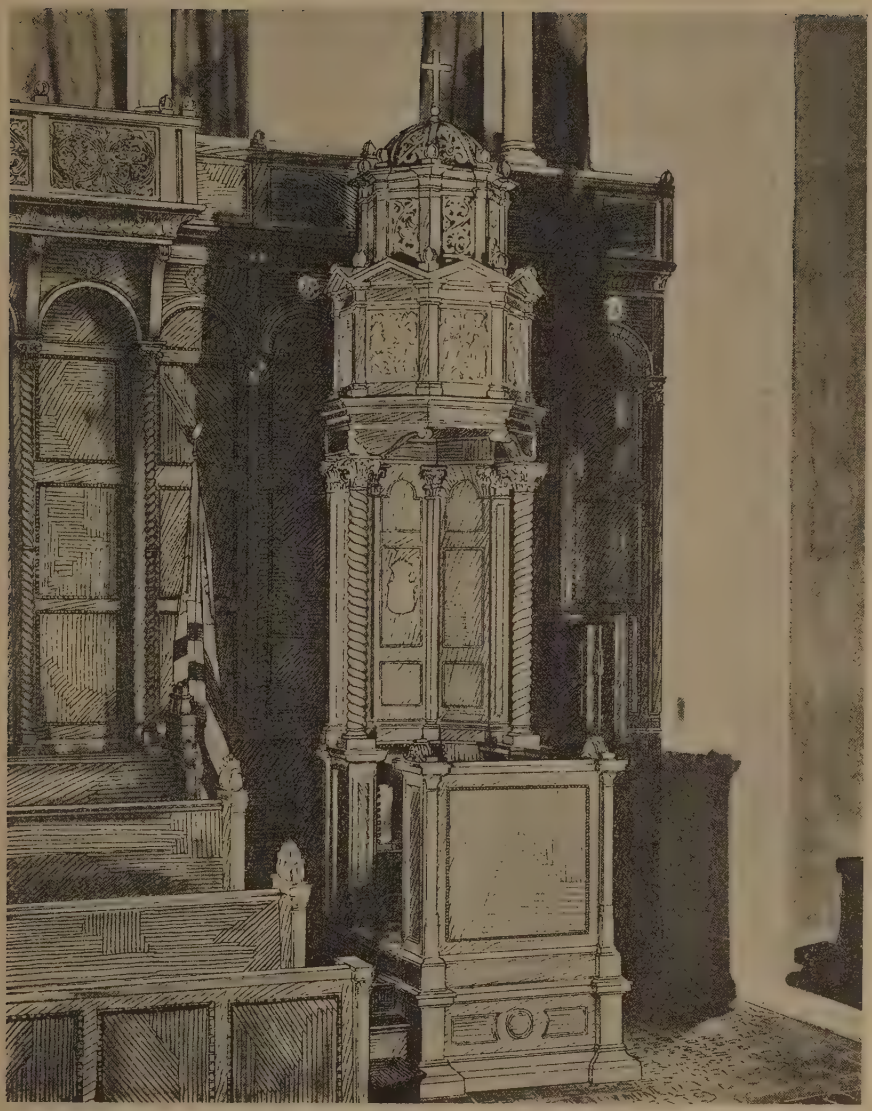
St. Sophia at Constantinople

zantine. "The constructive fundamental element of this style of architecture," writes an authority, "is the vault, and more especially the cupola." Visitors to Italy know how the cupola was used in the Pantheon at Rome—in the form of half a hollow ball covering a circular space. At Constantinople the cupola was used in connection with a complicated many-naved building. Eight, sometimes only four, strong piers were arranged in central positions and bound together by strong arches. On the binding arches an eight or four-sided upper building was raised, in the corners of which were niches. The circle was completed by a ring-shaped circular cornice, from which rose the vaulting. To the chief cupolas were attached smaller niches supported by columns, and next to these, on all sides, were ranged subordinated side spaces, over which was the women's gallery. No matter whether the church was four, eight or sixteen-sided, there always was a central structure, dominated by the great cupola with light coming in through the circular opening in the cornice.

It was necessary to provide space for the altar and for the priests. This was accomplished by projecting an apse on the east side, semi-hexagonal on the outside but semi-circular in the interior. On the west side an entrance hall was built. Apse, entrance hall and all other subordinate spaces were covered by cupolas. The Byzantine style, here but crudely described, was based on ancient models, especially the Greek. But slowly the simplicity and modesty of the Greek style was superseded by more ornate forms of columns, capitals, arches and mosaics.

The church of St. Sophia at Constantinople is the finest remaining example of the Byzantine style of architecture. It was built in the reign of the Emperor Justinian, 532 to 537. Some of the western cities adapted the Byzantine style of architecture. Venice, the great sea power of the Middle Ages, erected the magnificent church of St. Mark. Here, although the body of the structure remained square, with the cupola in the middle, the building took the form of the Greek Cross, having arms of equal length, whereas the Latin cross had its chief arms elongated. Generally, the Byzantine style exerted little influence on the architecture of the West.

MODERN BISHOP'S CHAIR,
AFTER THE ROMANESQUE STYLE



THE ROMANESQUE

The builders of the eleventh century modified the ancient Roman forms, originating what is known as Romanesque architecture, a slowly matured product of a long period and of many influences. With the minute details of these changes we are not specially concerned here, but we cannot help but observe the gradual change which came about. The northern French and the Germans along the Rhine led in the building of Romanesque churches. We find churches in this style in Cologne, Coblenz, Andernach, Linz, Sinzig, Zurich, Echternach, Trier, Huyseburg, Druebeck, Ilsenburg, Hildesheim, Naumburg, Maulbrunn and many other cities.

The two side altars were introduced. The exteriors became slightly more ornamental, and the entrance doors were enriched with sculptures in relief. In some Romanesque doorways lions are introduced. Often two square towers arise in front of the side aisles. Sometimes these towers have an octagonal roof, while below they are round. Again an octagonal tower is erected over the intersection of the nave and transept, or two towers on the side of the choir. And again the side arms are flanked by polygonal lanterns, or towers with winding staircases. Originally the towers were without any architectural details, but later the masses of wall were divided horizontally by mouldings and arch friezes and vertically by wall fasciae. The roofing, at first very simple, consisted principally of a saddle-roof. The cross-roof—two saddle-roofs transversely intercepting one another—was another form developed from this.

The village churches, of course, were less imposing. They generally had only a nave without aisles or transepts, sometimes aisles without a transept, sometimes a transept without aisles.

Vault building came into use in early times, but at first it was principally employed for the crypts in the basilicas. The choir and transept first were vaulted over, where there were strong supports in the powerful four middle piers and the inclosing walls. The simplest form of vault building is the barrel vault, which is nothing less than the complete union, in the form of a semicircle, of two lines, forming a semicircular arch. In the churches of southern France the naves are roofed with

Detail of Verdun Altar

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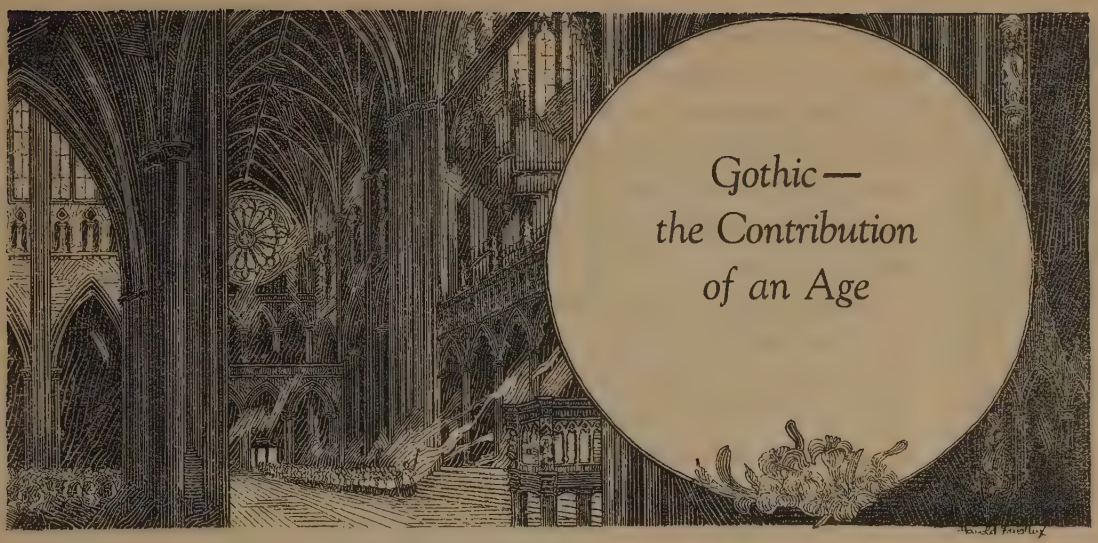
such barrel vaults, and from these this manner of construction was introduced into Spain.

The cross vault next comes into use. This consists of two semicircular vaults crossing one another and pressing against one another in opposite directions. There then remain four spherical triangles, forming a groin at the point of contact, and which, taken together, produce the form of the cross. The cupola vault, another development, is erected on a round plan, as its name suggests. The development of the vault naturally necessitated changes in the vault supports, the piers. With this new development was connected, on the Rhine, the plan of a raised cupola over the middle square of the transept, which appears outside as an imposing octagonal tower. These cupolas often received an upper light by means of a corona of windows in the inclosing walls.

The Romanesque style of architecture was in vogue in Western Europe until about the beginning of the Thirteenth century. Some time before the year 1200, architecture experienced a most important transformation by the introduction of the pointed arch. With the introduction of this form of the arch the way was prepared for the Gothic style of church architecture, the great and outstanding contribution of the Middle Ages to building construction.

Old Moorish Temple, Eighth Century



Gothic— the Contribution of an Age

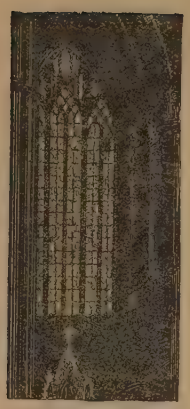
CHAPTER SIX

MANY have asked, when concerned in the building of a church, "Why Gothic?"

It is a question, like many others, that is answered according to viewpoint. A student of the arts will answer it from the standpoint of technique, the architect from that of construction, the philosopher from the trend of the times. But there is one answer that will always give the sincere seeker for truth a wealth of comfort, and it is this: "The Gothic church gives to the worshiper that sense of spiritual repose which he can find in no other spiritual shelter or environment."

The Gothic style of church building may be said to correspond in comfort and artistic beauty, among the Christian peoples, to the classic style employed by the Greeks in the building of their temples. It required more than a thousand years of searching and groping before it blossomed forth as exemplified in the most beautiful Christian churches of today. To fully set forth these beauties, as we understand them in both the spiritual and material, would take more space than is allotted to this fragmentary reflection on the story of the church.

While the modern church, in its structural architecture, is departing from some of the more rigid rules of the Gothic style, it can truthfully be said that in its interior appointments it is seeking an even purer in-



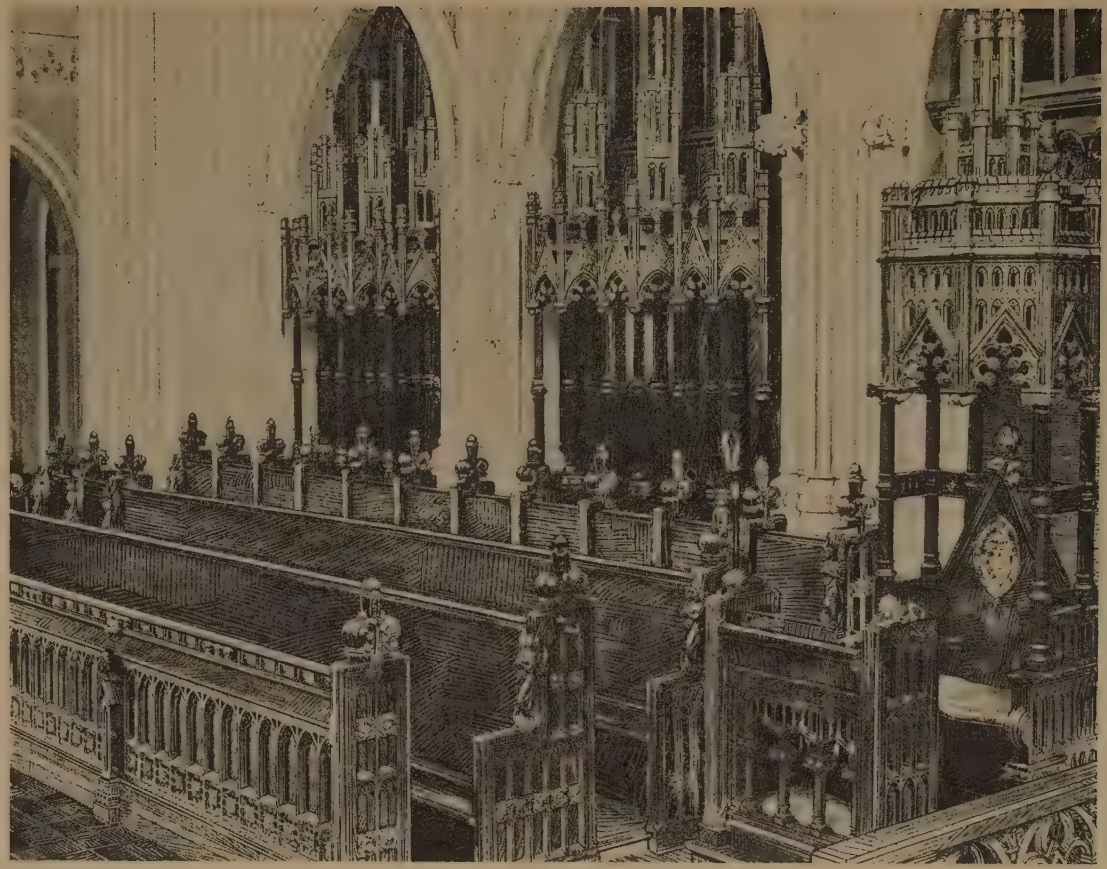
The Inspiring Light That Streams Through a Gothic Window

spiration of Gothic thought. Of late, this tendency to pause and look back has been more particularly noticeable among church builders who want their edifices to reflect the life and works of the Great Leader from Nazareth. If you men and women who have assumed the responsibility of building "the Lord's House" will but study and compare, you will find that the Gothic atmosphere is a mezzanine between the spiritual and the material upon which both can meet. Extremes in modern thought, as expressed in church-building, may catch your eye and hold your restless spirit for a moment, but the quiet glow of the setting sun through the extended varicolored Gothic windows will, somehow, carry your soul back to Gethsemane and keep it there.

It is fitting, therefore, that we tarry here, if only for a moment, over the story of this marvelous contribution of what is regarded as a dark and oppressive period, to the most uplifting influence of all times—the Christian church.

According to most authentic writers, the Gothic style appeared first in the north of France, in the Isle de France, in Paris and vicinity, during the last thirty years of the twelfth century. The style appears in England before the year 1200 and Germany adapted it perhaps for the first time in the building of the nave of the church of St. Gereon at Cologne, in the year 1212. In less than a quarter century thereafter the foundation of the most magnificent structure in the Gothic style which Germany has produced, the cathedral at Cologne, was laid. It may be of interest to mention here that the Goths contributed nothing to the style, but that the name "Gothic" was applied in derision to this form of church architecture by the Italians. Attempts of the Germans to rechristen it "Germanic," "German" and "Old German" failed.

"The chief tendency of the Gothic style," says Dr. Wilhelm Lubke in "Ecclesiastical Art in Germany During the Middle Ages," "is to render every part thinner and more extended. It was acknowledged that by using the pointed arch, the thrust of the vault was directed on one single point, and that low down, and so the thick walls of the earlier times could be dispensed with, if care was taken to give a sufficient support to this point." The flying buttress came in, and the square form in the plan of the interior space was omitted. The piers were placed so near to one another that each vault of the nave formed a long parallelogram,



the longer sides of which were those across the nave, while the shorter sides were about three-quarters of the size of the larger ones. This enriched the perspective. Large windows could be introduced. The arrangement of the choir was so altered that the crypts, which came in towards the end of the twelfth century, were done away with. The choir was raised and shut in by stone screens, richly ornamented. In the large buildings the side aisles were often continued as corridors around the choir, and sometimes even the choirs have four apses.

An important change in the interior of the churches was the disappearance of paintings from the walls and the appearance of glass painting in the windows. On the exterior, the formation of the pilaster buttress and the flying buttress gave a characteristic charm to the Gothic style. Architects soon found innumerable spots in which they could introduce embellishments, until the modern student is almost bewildered as he observes the many details of both the exterior and interior structure of some of the fine old cathedrals.

The early Gothic builders paid much attention to the tower, the arrangement of which often is magnificent. Generally there were two strong square towers at the west end of the church, which became octagonal above and sometimes ended in a point of open tracery, united by a gable, considered by architects the most beautiful form. But sometimes there was only one tower. At the same time, the towers disappear from the eastern end of the structure. In Germany, the arrangement of a nave and two side aisles of equal height was generally adopted.

The Gothic epoch, in Germany especially, is divided into three periods—the first 1225 to 1300, the second 1300 to 1375 and the third 1375 to 1525. The three periods are most surely recognized by the formation of the mullion work of the window and of the tracery, by the vault supports, by the vault ribs and by the independent ornaments, which are more interesting to the architect and student than to the casual reader.

Gothic Tower, Early French Church

The remarkable era of church-building in the later Middle Ages may be explained by the gradual reawakening of interest in the arts, by the growing wealth of the merchant class, by the intermingling of the peoples, by the desire of kings and nobles to commemorate their times and by the wealth of the clergy, which in all countries was considera-

The Baptism of Conrad II

able. Then, too, cities began to have pride in their development. Many of these cities were free, and in northern Italy there were numerous city-republics which were proud and haughty. There was only one religion, and aside from the inroads of the Turks in eastern Europe there was no fear of the barbarian hordes which had overrun the Roman empire. The people in general may have been woefully ignorant and they may have lived in miserable abodes, but, as a writer remarks, "the very equality of ignorance tended to produce community of sentiment." There is a tradition that the Emperor Conrad II, whose baptism was an event in ecclesiastical history, on one day in 1030, laid the foundations of three churches, two of them the mightiest of the time—the minster at Limburg, the cathedral at Speier and the church of St. John the Evangelist in the same city.

Architecture had its awakening sooner than literature. And architecture devoted itself mainly to the building of houses of worship. "It might be supposed that of buildings so remarkable as these—buildings which occupied so large a place in the thoughts and labors of the generations by which they were erected, and in which the faith of the time found its most complete visible expression—full accounts would have come down to us from those who were engaged in or who witnessed their construction," observes Charles Eliot Norton in his interesting volume, "Historical Studies of Church-Building in the Middle Ages." "But such is not the case. Little information concerning them, compared with their social and historical importance, has come down to us. Even the poets fail to show sympathy with the popular emotion as expressed in these creations of the imagination. It would seem as if the intensity of the motive of these works interfered with attention to the works themselves."

If, however, as we have often asked in this discourse, students and writers of future civilizations will ever reflect upon our spiritual and cultural contribution to the advancement of the human race, such reflection will of necessity center around the Gothic church. Regardless of the absence of detailed information as to how these churches came into being, what were the particular motives that inspired their builders, we know that they were the fruits of a sincere, though from a cultural standpoint probably a simple and even ignorant, faith. Our own churches,

built by the richest peoples and in the richest times known to history, pale into insignificance beside the magnificent structures of this comparatively starved and oppressed period. Whoever built them knew the story of worship in stone and wood. If that was not a conscious knowledge, the greater the proof that mankind and its God or gods can meet only when and where man has given of his best to prove his faith.

This chapter can be no more fittingly ended than with the closing paragraph of a recent edition of "Church Building," by Ralph Adam Cram, the distinguished church architect, in which he compares modern achievements in church-building with those of the past:

"Yes, this is 'the best we can do' under present conditions. Architects and other artists can do—have done—much, but they have reached the limit of possibilities in initiation. The master builder and his faithful craftsmen formed Rheims cathedral; yes, but they could not have done this but for the spiritual force informing all society that drove them on. If we are to see a further step onward from restoration and recovery to re-creation and revelation through a new form of Christian art, it will be through the return of unity to the church and universal acceptance of the Apostolic faith—the faith that made Hagia Sophia and Santiago de Compostella, Pisa and Peterborough, Amiens and Westminster, Antwerp and Seville and St. Mark's."

Apse,
Liverpool Cathedral

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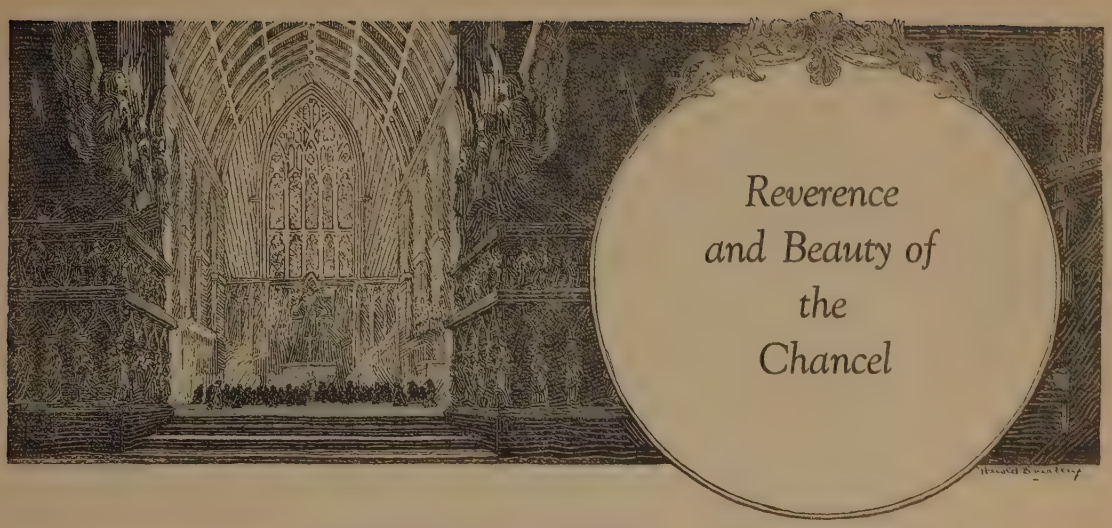


Reverence and Beauty of the Chancel

CHAPTER SEVEN

MODERN church builders have a few traits that distinguished the builders of the ancient temples. They enter upon their work with enthusiasm and good intentions; up to a certain point they toil with patience and determination; they visualize the completed structure and strive to make the real as perfect as their ideal.

But, until very recently, there has been a great difference between the temple builders of today and those of olden times. The moderns let their enthusiasm cool off; their patience is too soon exhausted, their determination lacks thoroughness; in their eagerness to have the job completed they sacrifice their ideal to time and expediency. Only in the last quarter century have we begun to recognize in America that church building is an endless task, a continuing job that never is and never can be concluded. Under the wise guidance of a few noble architects and builders we now realize that the ideal must be high and that only with the exercise of supreme courage, patience, devotion and determination can we hope to erect structures for divine worship that will in any manner approach the superb edifices of the past.

It is difficult for us, living in an age of changing and shifting standards, to understand the reverence for perfection that urged the master builders of the past to devote a whole life to a mere detail. Yet,

Constructing Model of Cathedral, Middle Ages

the story of the ancient Christian church is rich in examples of such devotion. Generation after generation labored upon the church structure, and further generations upon its interior. Today we begin, as did the ancients, with good intentions, but the man or woman who is privileged to go to sleep at one end of the continent and awaken at another, "cannot understand why it should take so long to build a church." Nor can the business man, who is accustomed to ordering a building today and occupying it in two or three months, grasp the significance of time and cost in the building of an altar, a pulpit or a choir screen for his church.

Here begins the vast gulf which separates in point of beauty and endurance the temples of the Greeks and the churches of the Middle Ages from similar structures of modern times. The works of the ancients represent time and thought; that of the moderns, speed and economy. To be sure, many church builders of modern times can and do visualize, as did the builders of old, the completed structure, the majesty of its perspective, the grandeur of its architecture and, possibly, the sanctity of its interior, but few follow that vision to its final and logical conclusion. The result is that when completed, the church does not live in the memory of man or in the hearts of worshipers. If the church does not live, to what extent will the spirit live?

The superiority of the ancient churches and temples over those erected in recent times is not due so much to the absence in our day of inspired artists and skilled workmen as to the lack of perspective among the worshipers themselves. Churches in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were built over many years to endure for centuries. The churches we build today are often makeshifts, which are not expected to live more than one or two decades. Particularly is this true as to their interior equipment. We are apt to forget, or do not know, the tremendous significance which is attached to each piece of chancel furniture and the history that has added to the sanctity of our altars, pulpits, screens and pews. This necessary knowledge will aid us in evaluating church equipment and insure against its hasty or ill-conceived preparation.

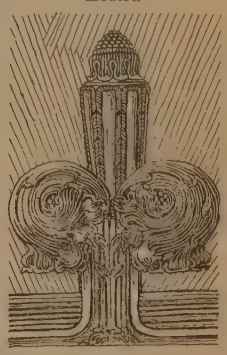
There is nothing upon this earth to which so much time, thought and effort have been devoted as the interior equipment of the church. It is true that the architectural properties of the church have engaged the minds of the greatest builders of the ages, but once its walls have been

completed, the roof secured and the debris of structural operations removed, the builder's work is done. In our times, in fact, the building of a church is considered in two distinctly separate channels of activity —the structural and the furnishing, or equipment. So much stress has been laid upon the completion of the visible structure that when the last tile is laid upon its roof, we are inclined to breathe a sigh of contentment and exclaim, "At last, our church is completed."

In the story of the past, however, this did not apply to the work of the ancients. It did not apply to the temples of Egypt, to the Parthenon, to St. Peter's or to Notre Dame. It did not apply to the great cathedrals of England or to such church edifices in our own country as have lived. Quite to the contrary, the process of church building was a continuous one. All through the past, the church has grown with the spirit and with the community. It has grown imperceptibly at times, but constantly, toward a well defined purpose. It is this slow growth over the years that eventually produced the greatness and comfort of the world's foremost cathedrals. It is this patience that has reflected, particularly in the interior of the church, the patience of Christ. It is the mellowness thus obtained that has helped to perpetuate the word of God. That is why, when we enter a church, properly designed and appropriately furnished, we are gripped by the intensity of its spiritual strength and drawn closer to the infinite.

How compelling is this flood of reverence as we walk slowly up the aisle of a church whose interior enrichment gives testimony to the best that its worshipers could produce. Instinctively, as we near the chancel, we recall the Holy of Holies as planned by the Most High in the formative days of our faith. Instinctively, we are reminded of the coming of His Son, of the Sermon on the Mount, of Jerusalem and Gethsemane. All that has transpired in man's spiritual life passes in review as we bow in silent reverence before the Creator of all things. How can it be denied, in these spiritually restless times, that this influence has not saved the human race from disintegration and decay? And how may we better preserve that influence than by surrounding it with our highest concept of that which is beautiful and inspiring?

Finial of Choir Stall, Modern



The equipment of the interior of a church may be said to require the use of all the architectural and decorative arts. As all, or nearly all,

Early Altar, Etruscan

the arts have grown out of worship, likewise are we today re-applying them in the furnishing of the Lord's House. Little of what may be called new has come to us during the past few centuries. Hence, we must use or reconvert the best out of the past. We must be governed not alone by the skill, but by the customs of those who established a higher standard in church equipment than we can reach through original sources. To be sure, we can copy and transplant, but with that process is required study, thought and culture. A highly ornate Venetian altar has no place in an early English chancel setting, yet you will find combinations far more distressing in churches where neither time nor means have been spared to attain perfection. A profusely carved Gothic pulpit, perhaps a faithful copy of a masterpiece, often cries out in pain at the presence of a lectern having the machine atmosphere of our own intensely industrial age. And wherever there are cries of pain, there is no peace.

Chancel equipment, therefore, is an art, a study. To be perfect, chancel equipment must first harmonize with the church itself, with some period of the decorative arts, and above all it must convey the sanctity and the repose which the worshiper seeks in the House of his God. Volumes have been written on chancel equipment but, unfortunately, they have been read only by those who have found pleasure in ecclasiastical literature. From this literature, however, as well as from existing examples, we have gleaned all that we apply today in interior church embellishment. Teeming with romance, spiritual inspiration, examples of sacrifice and skill, this literature has taught us what we know about furnishing a church. To translate this wealth of knowledge for the common enjoyment of all, is the duty of every building committee actively engaged in the planning and construction of the church today. Without that translation, your church becomes merely a place where you are expected to register as a moral or social duty. It does not become a place to which you or your spirit yearns to go.

Let us consider the character, importance and history of chancel equipment and church furniture.

ALTARS

Nothing in the church is more sacred than the altar. As we have noted elsewhere, the builders of early Christian basilicas appropriated the

ROOD SCREEN, PULPIT AND LECTERN,
ALL SAINTS EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

prytaneum as a part of the architecture of the church, attaching it, or half of it, to the end of the building and forming what is known as the "apse." True, then, to one of the oldest traditions of mankind, the apse contains the altar of worship and the sacred fire, the most sacrosanct of all investitures of worship in all lands and at all times. Before the altar of all gods and of all peoples the fugitive, the accused and even the convicted found temporary protection or surcease from prosecution. Before the days of Solon, the altar was the *habeas corpus* of civilization, and to this day even the most godless and depraved hesitate before they desecrate it.

The first altars in Christian churches appear toward the end of the third century. They were made of wood and were called *mensa domini,* which means "The Lord's Table." The altar was so named in commemoration of the table at which Christ partook of His last supper. There is also evidence of portable tables having been used previous to the appearance of the stationary altars.

Beginning in the fifth century, altars become large and massive, profusely ornate and elaborately enriched with inlays of gold, ivory and precious stones. An example of this type of altar may be found in St. Sophia, at Constantinople, and in St. Ambrogio, Milan, the latter dating from the ninth century.

During the first centuries of Christianity, the altar was detached and the celebrant stood behind it, facing the congregation. Back of him, along the curve of the apse, sat the bishops and church dignitaries. In later times the altar was placed further back in the apse and the celebrant took his position before it with his back to the congregation. At all times, however, the high altar was raised three steps so that the celebrant might ascend the first and last step with his right foot.

Early Christian Cross From Milan

With the appearance of the high altar came also the introduction of minor altars in various parts of the church. These consisted largely of three stone or marble slabs, two acting as supports and a third laid horizontally over them. The principal altar of St. Vitale, Ravenna, and the Romanesque altar in the cloister church at Peterhausen, near Constanz, may be considered as exemplary types of these altars. Henry the Lion erected in 1188 in the Cathedral of Brunswick a beautiful altar on this order, except that the top marble slab rested on five bronze columns.

Carved Top of Prayer Desk, Modern Adaptation

As long ago as the fourth century, there were seven altars in the Lateran church at Rome. Later, in cathedrals like that at Magdeburg, there were as high as fifty altars of various sizes, forms and designs. The altar on the west side of the choir screen usually occupied a prominent position and was dedicated to the Holy Cross. Above it, on a cross beam, was placed a large painted crucifix of wood. Figures of the Virgin and of St. John were commonly used in the appointments of this altar.

One of the most engaging histories of structures and objects of Christian worship is that of the cathedral at Siena, Italy, its ancient altar pieces and pulpit. The church from which the present structure, no doubt, traces its origin, was begun in 1245. In 1308, Duccio di Boninsegna, who is said to have rivaled even the Florentine masters as a painter, undertook to paint a picture for the high altar of the duomo. Records still remain designating the terms and conditions surrounding the transaction. All the materials were to be supplied to him without cost and he was to receive for his labors compensation at the rate of sixteen soldi a day. During the period of his employment he was not permitted to do any other work, "so that the said Duccio shall be bound to put nothing into it but his own self and his labor"—"*ita quod dictus Duccius nihil in ea mictere teneatur, nisi suam personam et suam laborem.*"

Let us pause for a moment and compare the church building of these "dark ages" with the manner and conditions under which we build and equip our structures of today. Fancy incorporating in the contract for your church or cathedral that a celebrated artist shall not be permitted to devote his thought or effort to any other pursuit during the term of his employment! To be sure, that arrangement might be made for labor, but it would not be safe to suggest such a clause to a temperamental artist of our time.

It was such devotion, however, that explains the existence to this day of these ancient cathedrals and works of art. And it is such devotion that is often lacking in the equipment and adornment of modern church interiors. Though well paid at the time, Duccio worked neither for money nor fame, yet his work surpassed anything achieved in Tuscany up to that time and contained all the freshness and purity which then distinguished the reviving arts.

The history of the altar pieces in the cathedral at Siena emphasizes

the infinite pains, the indescribable pride of achievement and the integrity with which church interiors were designed and worked out even during the so-called "dark ages." Some altars were the works of many years, delayed sometimes for the lack of funds and at other times because the artist or craftsman failed to produce the best that could be had. Before an altar was accepted it was passed upon by committees of artists and authorities whose differences of opinion often led to extended debates and prolonged argument. Nothing was done in haste, nothing was slipshod. Artists and artisans were honored and ennobled according to their work, and some, whose lives were in keeping with their achievements, were canonized.

The Germans, having led most European craftsmen in wood carving, were among the first to produce altar builders of historic note. Their work, though large, was highly ornate, painting and gilding forming a notable part of altar enrichment. They held close to a pictorial style and their figures and scenes were treated with much naturalism. Lucas Moser, one of the foremost altar makers, lived in the fifteenth century. Then came Hans Schulein and after him Friedrich Schulein, who executed and carved the great altar in Rothenburg. Other carvers of note who worked on German altars were Adam Kraft, Veit Stoss, Peter Vischer and Albrecht Durer. They contributed much to the form and general adornment of the high altar as we know it today.

Among the carvers and painters of Spain whose work on altars distinguished him to posterity was Alonso Cano, a native of Granada, born in 1601. His father was a carver of *retablos* and trained his son to follow in his footsteps. One of the younger Cano's first and most notable works was the high altar for the church of Lebrija which his father had begun in 1630, when he suddenly died. We are told that Alonso made this altar so beautiful that he was paid two hundred fifty ducats more than he asked. The altar became an attraction for altar builders and carvers in all parts of Europe, who journeyed to Lebrija to study and admire it. Like all Spanish retablos, it was highly colored.

Carved Figure From a Reredos

The high altar at St. Mark's, Venice, is probably one of the richest in the world. It is only on special occasions that its famous altar piece, set with brilliant and precious stones and adorned with pictures in enamel, is exhibited. Under this altar are said to have been placed the

Carved Panel, Modern

mortal remains of St. Mark. Another altar which may be measured somewhat by its material value is that in the Naples cathedral, which is said to have cost more than one million francs. It is covered with porphyry and numerous silver and bronze ornaments. The most outstanding of these is a silver bas relief in the front, representing the removal of St. Januarius to Naples. It was made in 1497 by Cardinal Carafa, who is represented mounted on a horse carrying the sacred deposit. The silver bust of St. Januarius was made in 1306. It is profusely covered with jewels, the gifts of many kings, queens and princes.

One of the first altars erected in England was on or near the spot now occupied by the Cathedral of Ely. It came into being about the time that St. Augustine and his courageous little band of missionaries began preaching the gospel from Canterbury to London. The isle of Ely then formed a part of the kingdom of East Anglia, founded by Uffa, who claimed to be a descendant of Woden, a Germanic deity corresponding to the Greek Zeus. Redwald, who occupied the throne of East Anglia at the close of the sixth century, was persuaded by his brother, Ethelbert, king of Kent, to embrace Christianity, which he did, receiving the ordinance of baptism in 599. He subsequently erected a church upon the island in which he built altars to both his new God and the gods of his ancestors.

A transept called the "Nine Altars" was begun during the episcopate of Richard le Poore, from 1199 to 1239, forming a part of what is now Durham cathedral. It was so called because of nine bays in each of which was placed an altar. These altars stood against the eastern wall and were dedicated respectively to St. Michael the Archangel, St. Aidan and St. Helena, Sts. Peter and Paul, St. Martin, Sts. Cuthbert and Bede, St. Lawrence, Sts. Thomas of Canterbury and Catherine, Sts. John the Baptist and Margaret, and Sts. Andrew and Mary Magdalene.

The significance of altar building warrants a far more detailed consideration than can be given here. Literature on the ecclesiastical arts abounds with narratives of the devotion and sacrifice of the master artists and craftsmen who gave to the world these magnificent tributes to the living God. Whole lives were consecrated to the building of a single altar and frequently the son, following in the footsteps of his father, took up the work where the elder left it. Do you wonder, then, reader, why we must

turn to these inspired workmen for the best and purest in the beautifying of the Lord's house and why it takes time and effort to produce that which is most fitting and most commensurate with the purpose for which it is intended?

CHANCEL RAILS

The chancel rail is a more or less modern designation of the dividing line in a house of worship between the premises of God and man. Elsewhere we have recalled how this dividing line came into being in the sacred groves, in early pagan temples and as it separated among the Jewish people the Holy of Holies from the profane.

While chancel rails were always used in English churches, they were not always a necessity, as the chancel screens were fitted with doors to separate the clergy and the altar from the laiety. But when the orders of the Reformation removed the majority of the rood screens and took the doors off those that remained, rails across the chancels became necessary, and they were generally adopted in the early days of Queen Elizabeth. But in 1641 the Long Parliament ordered the removal of altar rails, which were again replaced with the Restoration.

In other countries, where the Evangelical faith persisted, the history of the chancel rail is not so checkered. On the continent the rail has had its place in the church since early times, and in the Middle Ages wood carvers were employed to make it as attractive as possible. But this particular piece of church furnishing is not susceptible to so much adornment as the altar, the screen, the wainscot and the entrance. Good taste would appear to dictate simplicity in design rather than a profuse embellishment of the rail. In search of beauty, the eye wanders upward rather than toward the floor. Besides, the rail should not detract from the altar itself, which it protects against the intrusion of profanities.

Chancel Rail, Modern

SCREENS

Chancel screens have been in more general use in England than in any other Christian country, and nowhere have they been brought to a higher degree of artistic excellence. From the earliest days of Christianity the screen has been in use in churches, on account of the sanctity in which the chancel was held, and low colonnaded screens were estab-

Carved Figure From Medieval Manuscript

lished in the first Italian basilicas. During the later Middle Ages almost every English parish church possessed a screen, and despite fanatical violence and perverted taste considerably more than a thousand remain to us today, sometimes grievously mutilated but always bearing witness to the piety and genius of those who raised them. Of the remaining ones of medieval date by far the greater number are of wood. But stone screens also remain, chiefly in the collegiate and monastic churches and in cathedrals.

Wood carvers of the Middle Ages devoted their highest talents to the embellishment of churches, but in the adornment of the rood screens they fairly outdid themselves. The wooden screens are of two types, square-framed and arched. The square-framed, the older of the two types, consists of a rectangular base with a central doorway and two side bays. The base is of solid, plain wainscot, or decorated with painted figures, or traceried. Upright shafts above the wainscot divide the bays. The uprights, or muntins, are turned or moulded. Later, when modifications began, they were carried into a beam carved with a series of arches immediately below it. The arch-shaped openings were often beautifully decorated.

No arched screens remain of a period earlier than 1400. This type is a development of the square-framed screen. Parclose screens, whose function was to enclose side chapels, were numerous in England in the Middle Ages.

The chancel screen was later strengthened, that it might serve as a support for the rood. The custom of fixing the great crucifix at the entrance to the chancel was adopted as early as the beginning of the thirteenth century, and was general during the two succeeding centuries. The earlier method was to rear great beams above the chancel screen to support the rood and its attendant figures of the Blessed Virgin and St. John. Unfortunately, a Reformation order insisted upon the removal of all rood figures, so that many were badly mutilated. After the Reformation there was a revival of the use of the chancel screen. The post-Reformation type resembles the medieval. Those of the times of James and Charles retained the traditional square-frame construction with the paneled base, mullioned shafts and decorated head beam. The decoration,

however, differed from that of the Middle Ages, in conformity with the altering conditions of life and religious views.

In recent years, in the United States, there has been a revival of interest in the screen. As architects and designers have studied the medieval cathedrals and parish churches, they have found new beauties in this feature of interior furnishing and are adapting it as consistent for all denominations. The present day wood carver also draws upon historic examples in decorating the screen, improving as he adapts. For certain types of churches no feature is of more vital importance than a beautifully designed and traceried screen.

THE PULPIT

Before the days of Christianity the pulpit, as we know it today, was not considered such an essential part of the furnishing of the house of worship. Paganism was more concerned with forms and ceremonies than with the teaching of abstract truth. The people did not assemble regularly, as we do once a week, to hear the essentials of religious faith expounded by the priesthood. Religion was not a thing of the mind so much as a thing of the emotions. Oratory was reserved for the political forum in countries where there was a form of democracy, otherwise few were privileged to raise their voices in national councils.

The one outstanding exception among the ancient nations in this respect was the Hebrew. His was a religion of the spirit, a theology of reason. No other race produced the preacher, the seer, the exponent of the people's religion, as he is embodied in the prophets of Palestine. Most influential upon the history of mankind of all the preachers of the ancient Hebrews was Ezra, priest and scribe. To him we owe the preservation and transmission of the Old Testament to futurity. And he was also the first pulpiteer. In the Scriptures it is recorded that Ezra, when reading the law, stood on a pulpit of wood, high above the people. It was necessary for any speaker in those days to seek an elevated spot from which to deliver his discourse, as generally the multitudes he addressed stood before him and they could not see him unless he was "high above their heads." The people wanted to see as well as hear the preacher.

Detail of Pulpit, Modern

The *ambon* was the original pulpit among the Christians. In the

Elisha in Wood, Pulpit Decoration

Greek churches it was in the center of the church structure, but often it was on one side of the nave, elevated sufficiently to afford the faithful a clear view of the speaker. Ambons may still be found in many churches in Italy, the oldest of which is that in the cathedral of Ravenna, dating from the sixth century.

The word ambon is from the Greek word "to mount," because it was ascended by steps, and the form "ambo" is frequently used, as there were generally two steps. Sometimes there were two of these elevations, the Gospel being read from one and the Epistle from the other. Usually, the Gospel ambon was on the north side—the altar of the church being in the east—and the Epistle ambon was on the south side. In later centuries the pulpit was most frequently on the north side of the nave, the side occupied by the women.

In the thirteenth century the pulpit was developed out of the ambon. In Germany the name *kanzel* is retained as a reminiscence of the choir balustrade, or *cancelli*. While the Romanesque style of architecture was in vogue, the pulpit was often of stone and stood in connection with the screen or leaned against a pier of the nave. A parapet, sometimes ornamented in relief, terminated it and it was reached by steps of stone. In Italy the pulpits were more generally isolated structures resting on columns and profusely ornamented. In the cathedral of Narbonne there is a movable pulpit of the fourteenth century, consisting of two iron supports set saltierwise and supporting a bookstand of supple leather. The pulpits of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, and of Bury St. Edmunds, mentioned in the twelfth century, were movable. In Belgium the ambo faldstool set before the altar served as a pulpit. In France there were several pulpits overlooking cemeteries.

The pulpit was usually hexagonal or octagonal. Thus it presented a number of surfaces upon which the carver could exercise his genius, his ingenuity and his skill. Perhaps the most beautiful pulpit surviving in Germany from the Middle Ages is that in the church of Wechselburg. On this is represented the enthroned Redeemer between Mary, John and the symbols of the Evangelists, as well as Moses with the brazen serpent, Cain and Abel with their sacrifices, and Adam's offering. The most important Teutonic pulpits of the late Gothic time are in St. Stephen's at Vienna, dating from 1430, in the collegiate churches at Stuttgart and

CHANCEL, ALTAR, PULPIT AND LECTERN,
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH,
WADSWORTH, OHIO

Herrenberg, in the minsters at Ulm, Strassburg and Freiburg in the Breisgau, in the cathedral at Freiberg in the Harz mountains, and at Basle. Generally, in the churches of all countries, the four Evangelists were the favorites with the sculptors who decorated the pulpits. Some of the medieval pulpits, both wood and stone, were vividly colored, but in most instances the paint has long since been obliterated.

Some of the most beautiful English pulpits of both the pre-Reformation and post-Reformation periods have been preserved. Of the stone pulpits extant from before the days of Henry VIII, there are sixty in the parish churches, chiefly in the counties of Somerset, Gloucester and Devon. And there are fully one hundred oak pulpits dating from earlier than the sixteenth century, chiefly in the counties of Norfolk, Devon and Cornwall. In Norfolk alone there are upwards of 650 old churches, 24 of which have pre-Reformation pulpits. A notable example of these is that in the small church of Burlingham St. Edmund, of the early fifteenth century and delicately painted. Its eight panels, alternately red and green, are powdered with stars and flowers. The top of the pulpit is embattled, and round the base is a series of quatrefoils. The church at Burnham Norton has a beautifully painted but small pulpit built in 1475. The panels bear the four Latin doctors of the church, and also kneeling figures of John Goldale and Catherine, his wife, the donors, for whose souls the prayers of the faithful are invited.

After the Reformation there came about a change in the carvings on the pulpits. Fewer effigies were used and scrollwork and other fanciful designs were resorted to by the artists. Also, with the advent of the Puritans and of those other sects which cared not so much for the material as for the purely spiritual, there often was a tendency toward simplicity if not to strict lack of artistic adornment.

Carved Panel of Pulpit, Modern

In modern times the pulpit naturally has come in for its rightful place in our splendid houses of worship. Planners and builders of our larger churches reckon with this rostrum for the minister as carefully as they reckon with the whole structure. Today, more than ever in history, the spoken word is potent in the church. Even those denominations which preserve the ceremonial of worship dedicate their most finished orators to the pulpit. The modern preacher of the Gospel also discusses economic and political subjects. He invites men and women of ability to talk from

Eagle Top of Lectern From Church at Tongres

his pulpit on every conceivable topic that can enlighten his congregation.

And thus the pulpit itself, the tribune of a religiously democratic people, is well worth all the art and all the skill which the artist and the artisan can lavish upon it. As never before, it is the center that attracts and holds the eye, even as the orator who occupies it sways our thoughts with his sound reasoning and his sympathetic discussion of our problems.

LECTERNS

Lecterns in modern churches are modifications of the marble ambon which was a conspicuous feature of the choirs in the first Christian edifices. In Perugia, Italy, and in Toledo, Seville, Zamora and other Spanish cities there are medieval specimens of this elevated desk, which is used when the Epistle or Gospel is sung. But in general, the large marble ambons have been supplanted by lecterns or book rests of more moderate dimensions and constructed of brass or wood.

Early in the history of the Christian church the eagle became the favorite emblem to crown the lectern used for Gospel reading purposes. The eagle is the special emblem of St. John the Divine. The eagle soars to the sun, even as the Evangelist in his Gospel and the Revelation discourses on the glory of the Sun of Righteousness. Some of the early Fathers regarded the eagle as typical of the Resurrection.

A few examples of early lecterns survive in the English churches. One at Wenlock Priory, dating from about 1200, is carved with twisted conventional foliage. In the parish church of Crowle, Worcestershire, there is one carved out of a block of blue gray limestone, the front and sides sculptured with a conventional vine springing from an inverted lion's head. And the church of Norton, near Evesham, has an ancient white limestone lectern, in the form of a sloping desk, with a sunken face and projecting rim to hold the book. In some old English churches small stones without decoration, obtruding from the north chancel wall close to the high altar, are supposed to have been used as Gospel lecterns.

Brass lecterns, surmounted by the traditional eagle, or the pelican, were quite numerous in medieval churches and some fifty examples have survived the destruction of the Reformation days, but the extant examples are chiefly of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

Naturally, wood was used for lecterns in the early days, and despite the edicts of the Reformers and the looting of the English churches by rapacious agents of the crown, about twenty examples of medieval wooden eagles survive. The workmanship on the wooden lecterns is exquisite, mediocre or poor, according to the times and to the skill of the artisan, and possibly was determined by the wealth of the parish. In the church of St. Cross, Winchester, for instance, there is a wooden eagle known as "the parrot eagle," on account of the stunted form of its beak. The sculptor evidently attempted to fashion the form of an eagle, but he could not overcome a flaw in the wood. In older lecterns the eagle is in various poses. Sometimes it holds a dragon with its claws, sometimes it is double-headed, again it looks backward.

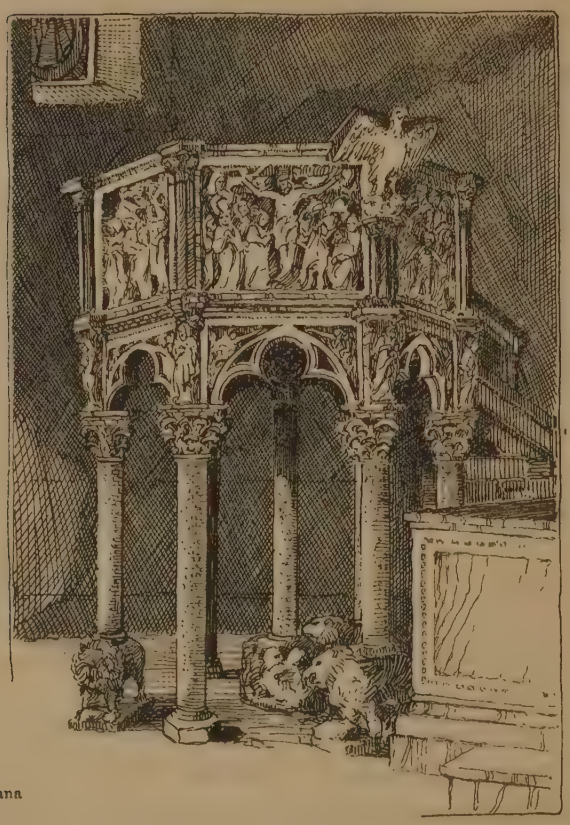
Cox describes the wooden lectern at Shipdham, Norfolk, probably the finest remaining example of the fifteenth century. He says it dates probably from 1470 and that the design is of much beauty and merit. "The lectern," says this writer, "is constructed with a triangular shaft consisting of three buttresses, the angles between them being ornamented with lines of small quatrefoils from top to bottom. The shaft rests on a base of three members extended in triangular form, and each supported by a lion sejant. At the top there is an embattled capital, which supports a double desk of the usual form; the sides of the desk are richly carved with circular designs, two on each, of varied tracery. The ends are also filled with quatrefoils and foliage, whilst a cresting of leaves forms the ridge."

The wood lectern is often desk-shaped in the English churches. It may comprise one, two or even four desks, and some of fifteenth century date bear traces of former coloring. One of the most unique has painted on it a versicle, with the old musical notation. This desk formerly stood on the rood loft. At East Hendred is a pre-Reformation single-desked lectern supported on a shaft which terminates in a human foot. There also is a projection for a lower book rest. In the gallery at Cublington is a revolving hexagonal desk, with turned post and curved feet, with the date 1675.

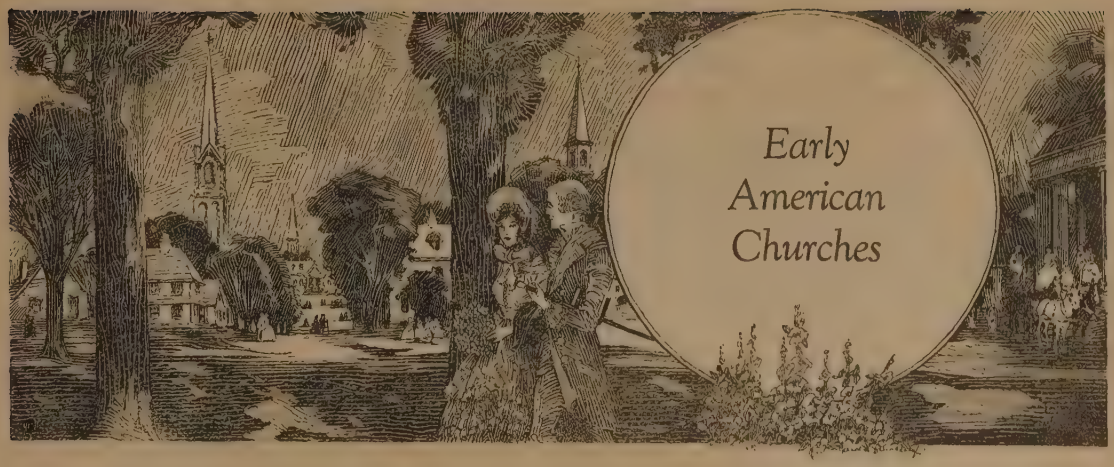
Detail of Lectern—Modern

American forms of the lectern are refinements of those of England and the continent. In this country wood is used almost exclusively for this detail of church furnishing. Designer and carver have striven for both

beauty and serviceability, while avoiding the use of grotesque figures and bulkiness of appearance. American church designers do not seek the conspicuous in any detail of interior church furnishings. Simple beauty is never conspicuous. The lectern should be in complete harmony with the other details of the church interior.



Pulpit of Nicola Pisana at Pisa

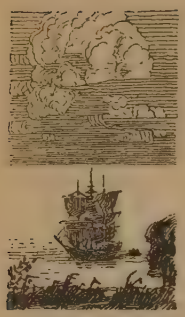


CHAPTER EIGHT

AMERICA was settled soon after the Reformation. The centuries beginning with the sixteenth, witnessed the building of few if any outstanding church edifices anywhere on earth. They were centuries of bitter warfare and often bitter religious strife, during which men did not have either the time or the repose to plan and build beautiful structures in which to worship. They were centuries during which there was in many quarters a distinct hatred of all that is beautiful and comfortable.

The old world strifes had their reactions in America. Then, too, the bulk of the brave men and women who emigrated from Europe to the new world were poor or were artisans or farmers in quest of a livelihood. The immigrants did not bother themselves much about art, beauty or culture. They had no time to spare for the higher pursuits of the leisure classes. However, all were deeply religious, from the Puritans who settled in New England to the followers of the Church of England who settled in Virginia and the other southern colonies. In fact, religion was a part of the state. Churches were supported by general taxation and attendance was compulsory, whether one believed in the particular dogma taught by the sect in control of the immediate community, or not.

The first immigrants built churches as soon as they had erected crude shelters for themselves and families. Naturally, these churches were



America Was Settled Soon After the Reformation

simple and unadorned, as rough and unbeautiful as the houses in which the settlers themselves lived. In New England, the Puritans did not desire anything that smacked too much of worldliness in the interior of their edifices, and in the southern colonies the Church of England followers could not procure much beautiful furniture for their churches, even had they desired it. None of the first churches erected in any of the settlements has been preserved to this day, but there are numerous structures built in a fairly early day which are still in use by the various denominations. There is a close architectural similarity between all the early edifices, and one authority who spent years in the study of church architecture tells us that the changes in design from 1638 to 1830 are far less noticeable than those in the quarter century after 1830.

"It is a common misapprehension," says Aymar Embury II, "that in New England the meeting houses were purposely made plain; the reverse was the fact. Their builders constructed them with all the skill of which they were masters, enriched them to the uttermost of their knowledge, and not only will a comparison of the churches with the other buildings of the same period prove this, but we find it expressly and repeatedly stated in the documents and histories of the time, though in neither the design nor the enrichment were the common symbols of the Christian faith included." This writer declares that probably the richest and most ornate of all American churches of the early period were Christ church and St. Peter's in Philadelphia, located midway between the North and the South.

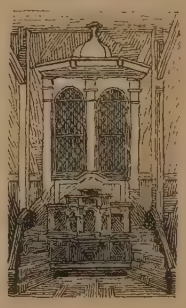
The expedition sent out by the Virginia Council of London, or the London Company, established itself in Virginia, on an island in the James river, forty miles from its mouth, in 1607. The colonists first built a fort, then in the center of the fort they erected their church. From the beginning, the Virginia church was an integral part of the Church of England and technically under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London. The church was supported by general taxation up to the time of the Revolutionary war, but since there was no bishop or any other responsible church authority in this country, the House of Burgesses of Virginia made such laws as were necessary for its government and the vestry decided minor questions. The church was so much a part of the state that offenses against it became offenses against the people. Thus, absence

from church, and theft, were both criminal offenses. As in the old country, abuses crept in, and before long the best pews were reserved for magistrates and their families, and private galleries were erected at their own cost by rich men of the parish. The church thus assumed an aristocratic aspect and the middle class entered its objection to being discriminated against. The abuses happily worked for the better, and about 1740 permission was given to the dissenters from the established church to worship according to their own desires. Then, at the time of the Revolution, the church voluntarily disestablished itself, becoming the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States.

When the Pilgrim Fathers established the second English settlement in America at Plymouth, Massachusetts, they had as their ministers, in probably the majority of cases, clergymen ordained by the Church of England. However, the clergymen, as the congregations, believed certain reforms within the church were necessary, these reforms being chiefly as to form of worship rather than as to doctrine. The Pilgrims constituted only a small proportion of the Puritans emigrating to New England from the old world, and were the first to advocate separation from the Church of England. And it was not very long before the New England church became wholly independent of the Church of England. There were two principal reasons for this. First, the Church of England refused to recognize the ministers the New England churches ordained. Second, the New England congregations declined to countenance the authority of the English bishops, organizing their own governing bodies, composed of the elders and ministers of the different congregations. And thus arose the Congregational church.

The New England church was as closely allied to the state as the church in Virginia. For a long time the governing bodies of the two were identical and before a man was given the right to vote he had to belong to one of the churches established by law. However, the man had to pay taxes to support the church, even when he was considered ineligible to membership. It was a century after the landing at Plymouth before exemption from taxation to support the Congregational churches was granted to Episcopalians, Baptists and Quakers and later to the Unitarians.

Pulpit at Old Ship Meeting House, Hingham, Mass.



The Presbyterian church was established in America much later

Window in St. Luke's, Smithfield, Virginia

than the Episcopal and the Congregational. The oldest official Presbyterian churches were founded by Scotch immigrants, and in due course of time the American Presbyterians became wholly independent of the Scotch. The first Lutherans coming to this country were of German, Swedish and Dutch stock. The Lutherans also gradually made themselves independent of governing bodies in Germany, Sweden and Holland. The Swedes of this denomination settled principally along the Delaware river. The Dutch Reformed and German Reformed churches were governed from Amsterdam until the English took New York, when they, too, became independent of the home body. The Roman Catholics settled mainly in Maryland, while the Quakers, although to be found in nearly all the colonies, were most numerous in Pennsylvania. Methodism began in this country only in 1760.

The oldest building in the United States of English construction is St. Luke's Episcopal church near Smithfield, Virginia. This structure was erected in 1632 and was used as a house of worship continuously for two hundred years. It was abandoned in 1836 and gradually became dilapidated, but it was restored about 1884. This structure is of brick, quite like some of the English parish churches of the sixteenth century. Although built when the Renaissance style was in favor in England, St. Luke's is reminiscent of the older Gothic. The tower is the only part of the building showing the Renaissance influence.

St. Paul's at Norfolk, Virginia, was originally built in 1638-41, but the present church on the site was erected in 1759. St. Peter's in New Kent County, Virginia, was built in 1700 and 1701. It is much like St. Luke's at Smithfield.

The New England church builders evolved a style all their own. Almost all the edifices erected there in the early colonial days were square or very nearly square, with a hipped roof and a belfry on the peak of the hips. The first churches were built for defense as well as for worship. They were set upon the hilltops, their high belfries affording an excellent place from which watchers could observe the surrounding country for hostile savages. Trees were not permitted to grow near the churches, but the settlers were obliged to build their houses within half a mile of the church, which made the meeting houses the centers of settlements throughout New England.

SECTION OF WESLEY CHAPEL,
METROPOLITAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

The only existing New England church structure dating from the seventeenth century is the "Ship Meeting House," at Hingham, Massachusetts. It has the hipped roof and small belfry, is square and plain. It was erected in 1681, probably by ship's carpenters, who put the framework together so skillfully that it has been able to withstand the wear and tear of two and a half centuries.

A church of unusual interest is Gloria Dei at Philadelphia, begun on September 19, 1697, and dedicated on July 2, 1700. The foundations were of stone, the walls of brick, the structure itself 60 feet long, 30 wide and 20 high. A sacristy was added in 1704. The congregation of Gloria Dei was Evangelical Lutheran, a branch of the State Church of Sweden, and it was governed direct by the Swedish church authorities. The land on which the church stands was given by a member of the congregation, and despite the fact that the Swedish colonists were ignorant and poor they supported their church so whole-heartedly that when it was dedicated the pastor said: "Through God's blessing we have completed a great work and have built a church superior to any in this country, so that the English, themselves, who now govern this province and are beyond measure richer than we are, wonder at what we have done."

What is most interesting is that the congregation of Gloria Dei in 1710 granted permission to members of the Church of England resident in Philadelphia to use this church for their services. And when the Church of England held services in this edifice a hymn was sung in Swedish to express the harmony between the two congregations. This probably was the first instance of its kind in America where two such distinct sects used the same edifice for divine worship. It was an instance of toleration and good will in an age when intolerance was a mark of nearly all religious sects in the old and new worlds. This structure is still used for services, but long ago the Swedish language was supplanted by English.

Gloria Dei,
"Old Swedes" Church,
Philadelphia

Trinity church at Wilmington, Delaware, has the same dimensions as Gloria Dei. It also was built by the early Swedish settlers and dedicated on Trinity Sunday in 1699. The walls were built of granite laid in clay and pointed up in lime mortar. It cost 800 pounds sterling, a large sum to be raised in those days by the poor Swedish worshipers, who enjoyed no state aid as did the churches of Virginia and New England. The

Spire of Old North Church, Boston

congregation, however, was an old one when it built its house of worship, having been founded in 1627, half a century before William Penn settled the Quakers in Pennsylvania. In 1792 this church decided to adopt the Protestant Episcopal ritual.

America's population, which increased slowly following the first settlements, began to grow rapidly in the beginning of the eighteenth century. At the same time the material wealth of the colonies increased and there came about a correspondingly greater interest in the arts and in general culture. This new interest in art, beauty and education was manifest in religion, too. Contacts with men and with groups of people of different religious beliefs tended to wipe out much of the old intolerance and bigotry evident in nearly all the first settlements. Then, too, the churches became centers of political agitation, which grew more intense as the eighteenth century progressed, to end in the War of the Revolution and consequent independence from the English crown.

Almost everywhere the first crude meeting houses were torn down and more comfortable, adequate and imposing edifices were erected on their sites. Typical of many churches erected in New England during the eighteenth century is what is now known as Old North church of Boston. This structure was completed in 1723, according to the most reliable authorities. The designer was a Boston print seller and draftsman, William Price, who had made a study of the London churches of which Sir Christopher Wren was the architect. This edifice was originally known as the New Brick church. It is a simple, rectangular structure, with two tiers of circular headed windows. The tower is its distinguishing characteristic. The lower portion of the tower is of brick, the upper of wood, stepped back in an artistic manner. Mr. Embury tells us that "the interior is perhaps more interesting than excellent; the superimposed order with square columns, the lower one supporting the balcony paneled and the upper one fluted, is not particularly well proportioned, and the plaster-vaulted ceiling is so obviously not structural that the building loses in dignity."

Old South church of Boston is known to all readers of American history. It was erected in 1730, after a design by Robert Twelves. The exterior, built of brick laid in Flemish bond, is severely plain, nearly square, and has a double row of windows. The spire is continued upward

in wood to a height of 180 feet, but it has none of the grace and beauty of that of Old North. The pulpit, in the old fashion, is well designed, and over it is a suspended sounding board.

King's chapel, Boston, is interesting because it is the oldest extant, as well as the first edifice erected in New England for the Protestant Episcopal denomination. The present edifice, the second to be constructed for the congregation, was begun in 1749 and occupied in 1753. The colonnade around the tower, which so distinguishes this church among all those erected in that age, was added in 1790. The interior is one of the best of the classic designed in America. King James II sent the original congregation a pulpit, still in use, and a communion service. Queen Anne sent a red damask cushion for the pulpit, surplices for the rector and choir, and altar linen. The organ was purchased with the advice of the great composer, Handel. Being a Tory church, it suffered no damage during the Revolution, since which time practically no change has been made in the structure, except that the governor's pew has been removed and the royal emblems taken down. King's chapel is no longer Episcopalian, being the first church in the United States to become avowedly Unitarian.

Church architecture advanced in the southern states during the eighteenth century, as it did in New England. Quite a number of edifices from that century survive. One of the oldest is the Bruton parish church at Williamsburg, which city became the colonial capital of Virginia in 1699. The present edifice in Williamsburg was completed in 1715. Exclusive of the wings it is 28 feet by 75. In this church the old pulpit is preserved, as well as the canopy and velvet curtain embroidered with the name of Alexander Spotswood, which hung over the governor's pew. A tower was added in 1769.

Colonnade, King's Chapel, Boston

Most famous, perhaps, of all old southern edifices is St. Michael's at Charleston, South Carolina, the cornerstone of which was laid by the governor of the state on February 18, 1752. The church was opened for service nine years later. It is entirely of brick covered with stucco, its length with portico being 130 feet, its width 60 feet and its tower 168 feet high. At the time of its construction this was considered the finest church edifice in America. The interior is elegant, with splendid candelabra, a beautiful pulpit and agreeable reredos and galleries. The

Pulpit, Christ Church, Alexandria, Va.

old-fashioned pews are still retained, but platforms have been built in most of them so the congregation may see over the tops.

Some other old edifices are Christ church at Alexandria, Virginia, and Pohock church, not far from Alexandria, both of which were attended by George Washington; the Home Moravian church at Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Christ church at Philadelphia; St. David's of Radnor, Pennsylvania; the Dutch Reformed churches at Oakland, Wyckoff, Bergen Field, Ridgefield, Hohokus and Hackensack, New Jersey; St. George's at Schenectady, New York; Tennant church near Freehold, New Jersey, the oldest Presbyterian church in the United States; St. Paul's church, New York; St. Peter's, Philadelphia; Holy Trinity at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, one of the oldest and most beautiful of the Lutheran churches; St. Paul's at East Chester, near Mount Vernon, New York; the First Presbyterian at Newark, New Jersey, and the Presbyterian church at Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Thus far we have dealt only with the various denominations of the Protestant church in America. The Roman Catholics can trace their church building back a little further than the Protestants. St. Augustine, Florida, is the oldest city in the United States. Ponce de Leon landed near its present site in 1512, although the city was not founded until 1565, when Don Pedro Menendez de Avilez, with 1,500 followers, disembarked there and took possession of the land in the name of Philip II of Spain. A Roman Catholic church was immediately erected, but it has perished with the centuries. The old Roman Catholic cathedral, begun in 1793, was burned in 1887, but the front wall remained almost intact and in rebuilding it was carefully preserved and incorporated in the new structure. The old bell, bearing the date of 1682, has been preserved.

Roman Catholic Spaniards also settled in the far southwest and in California at a very early date. The oldest of all churches in the United States is San Miguel at Santa Fe, New Mexico, built about 1605, partly destroyed by Indians and rebuilt in 1710. It is small and not interesting except historically. Although Spaniards explored California as early as 1542, no attempt at settlement was made until 1769, when the Franciscan fathers planted a mission at San Diego, and in the next seven years they established six other missions, the last being at San Francisco in 1776. Within fifty years the Franciscans had founded twenty-one of these mis-

sions. Nearly all were built in the characteristic style known as "mission," which is so familiar to all who live in or have visited California.

Our interest in all the early American churches is almost wholly historical. The pioneer architects and builders proved themselves capable and resourceful, accomplishing remarkable results with the materials with which they had to work. As has been said, America was settled at a time when mankind was taking a backward step, when wars and religious conflicts were wiping out whole populations and when art, beauty and culture were considered of no particular value by the great majority of mankind. The reaction lasted through several centuries, during which few outstanding structures, especially churches, were erected anywhere on earth. The American church edifices of those centuries will compare very well with those built in other countries. The Colonial style was at least positive and it had a meaning. It is characteristic of America, even though it is based upon classic models.

As the early English settlers came to this country at the time when there was a protest in the mother country against ritualism and formalism, the interiors of Colonial churches generally were severely plain. The Episcopalians alone made some attempt to embellish the church interiors, and, of course, the Roman Catholics followed the tradition of their faith in these matters, being handicapped by poverty and by separation from Europe and old world artists.

American architects were slow to comprehend the importance of studying church construction. Until quite recent times the people of this country were too busy subduing the soil and trying to earn a livelihood to pay much attention to the refinements of life. The value of artistic surroundings in the house of worship was not appreciated until people had begun to have more leisure. Hardly any big attempts at reform in church building were considered until after the middle of the nineteenth century. At first only a few architects specialized in church building, then more began thus to specialize. Even today the number in this country is none too large. But already we have a literature on the subject that is big and is growing, and any church building committee is able nowadays to acquaint itself with the requirements of the modern house of worship. Travel and contact have educated the public taste, until it no longer is satisfied with the box-like structures too generally erected in the past and used for divine worship.

San Jose Mission, San Antonio

Comfort and Repose in Worship

CHAPTER NINE

HERETOFORE our discussion has centered around the conscious or unconscious desire of mankind to express its spiritual urge in forms of worship and in temple and church building. Until Christianity succeeded paganism, however, there was little in worship that affected the status of the individual. Up to that time, he worshiped either from fear or because it was a custom. His ceremonies were more habitual than inspired. His gods were for the most part the fixed rulers of his life and against which he seldom rebelled. Whenever or wherever he erred, he was quick to appease his gods with offerings or spoils, by no means the least of which were the temples he built.

When we reckon today with the interior adornment of our churches we are moved by altogether different influences than were those who worshiped as a matter of form. As Christianity became more rightly and clearly understood, it established a new estate for the individual in the comfort it provided him in his devotion. Differing from the religions of the ancients and even from those of the Oriental countries of today, Christianity does not demand that prostration of the individual which forcibly enslaves him to his God. It does require a humility and meekness of spirit which can best be practiced in the environment in which the individual finds himself. That is spiritual as well as material comfort.

The Comforts We Enjoy Today Were Unknown to the Early Christians

In the early days of Christian worship, the comforts we enjoy today were unknown and not expected. As the posture adopted in worship was chiefly kneeling or standing, seats for the faithful were not considered necessary. In fact, throughout all the communions of the Eastern church at present seats are not provided. When feudalism began to spread throughout Europe and the status of the average man was lowered, not much thought was given to his comfort even during the hours of worship. A few seats, sometimes of stone and at other times removable, were provided for the aged and infirm, but in general the people stood or knelt on the floor.

The first seating space was set aside for the nobility. Elaborately decorated private pews were installed for the use of the lord and his family. Then, when the trading classes grew in wealth, they insisted upon comforts in church, and they had their own pews erected. Gradually, with a re-awakening of the real spirit of Christianity, pews were provided for the many in probably a large majority of the churches.

As the forms and furnishings of our church interiors have been so largely influenced by those of England, it will be worth while to give here a brief sketch of the seating arrangements of the British houses of worship, their origins and decoration.

On the Cornish coast there still exists the small church of St. Perran Zabuloe, dating from the sixth or seventh century. In this church there is a stone seat, 16 inches high and 14 inches wide, running round the interior of the structure, interrupted only by the doorways and the altar. In a number of other old churches in Britain there are surviving stone bench tables, most of them against the walls of the naves, others against the chancel walls. Thus these stone seats appear to have been a part of the building itself. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries stone bench tables encircled the bases of the piers of the nave arcades. These were of a height convenient for use as seats.

For the use of the ministers and singing clerks, seats or stalls, nearly always of wood, were provided within the chancel at a fairly early period. Until the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries these stalls were plain and massive. The Renaissance period was marked by the enrichment of the stalls, with sometimes elaborate carvings and handsome canopies of tabernacle work. This richness of decoration was most apparent in the

REREDOS PANEL,
TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
BAY CITY, MICHIGAN,
PORTRAYING THE TRANSFIGURATION,
DESCRIBED IN MATTHEW XVII.
THE FIGURES REPRESENT CHRIST, MOSES, ELIAS
AND THE APOSTLE JOHN

I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
IX
X

cathedrals and minsters, but the smaller churches in the kingdom also were adorned in keeping with the wealth of the people and the nobles.

In his volume, "English Church Fittings, Furniture and Accessories," which gives an excellent description of the furnishings of British churches, J. Charles Cox says: "Misericords are the hinged seats of the chancel stalls. These could be conveniently turned up to facilitate passing, but their chief use was to serve as supports for the priests and other clerks when reciting the psalms during the canonical hours. Few subjects are of greater fascination than the misericord carvings, which illustrate for us so vividly almost every aspect of medieval life, religious and secular. A few are carved with sacred symbols and religious subjects, but by far the greater number show incidents from everyday life. There are hawking and hunting scenes, weapons, agricultural and other implements, subjects from the bestiaries so popular in the Middle Ages, grotesque figure carvings and a host of other similar subjects that to modern thought may seem rather incongruous in a church. But it must be borne in mind that the medieval Christian was no Puritan in the invidious sense; his religion embraced every activity of life."

In England fixed seats in the body of the church were introduced about the end of the fourteenth century. The earliest seats preserved to this day are plain and massive benches with mouldings and ends cut out of the solid wood. In the succeeding century seats were provided by practically all the churches, and the benches were carved and traceried. The bench ends received particularly elaborate treatment, being carved with naturalistic, symbolic or grotesque ornament in infinite variety. In certain sections of the country the finials or standards of the bench ends terminate in tall "poppy heads," derived from the French word *poupee,* meaning a puppet or figurehead. The poppy head developed into various forms, saintly or grotesque human heads and figures, beasts and monsters, but the best and purest type is the carved fleur-de-lys. In other sections of England the bench ends were generally square-headed.

The Bishop's Chair, Modern

The manor pews multiplied after the Reformation. They originated in the parcloses surrounding the endowed chantries of the local lords. The parcloses, containing an altar for special celebrations and seats for the members of the family, were usually placed at the east ends of the aisles. After obituary masses were forbidden, the lords of the manor often

Side of Church Chair—Modern

retained the site of the chantry, which in due time became the family pew. Some of these manor pews, large and canopied, contained fireplaces and other conveniences. The squire claimed his right to a large family seat within the chancel on account of a right granted in medieval days to the patron of a church.

In early days flap seats often were attached to the ends of the permanent seats. These usually were assigned to the maids of the occupant of the permanent pew, or to the children. Later some of these flap seats were made permanent by the insertion of a bracket beneath them. Shriving pews are mentioned after the Reformation. It is thought these pews were for the use of those awaiting their turn to be shrived. And it was a sixteenth century custom to have the churching pew, or, as it sometimes was called, the midwife's pew, for use on the ritual of churching. In those days the midwife accompanied the young mother to church on that occasion. Also there was a special pew assigned to those seeking matrimony. Movable pews were placed in some British churches in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Frequently, in the old churches, private pews were fitted with iron bars across the entrance, to exclude all but the owner and his family. Out of the bar grew the door, which in time became fitted with a lock. As the pews were private, the individual owner saw no reason why he should not stamp his name or initial on it. Being private property, seats were bought and sold. After the Reformation, the seats in the church were allotted in accordance with the position or wealth of the parishioners of both sexes. There is the record of one church in which the two front seats in the south aisle were allotted to the lord and his lady. Behind them sixty-three women were seated at four pence each, and in the back pews twenty-one women were given the right to sit at two pence each. In the middle aisle four men were allotted seats in the front pew at one shilling each, ten men at eight pence each in the next two pews, six men in the fourth pew at six pence each, five women in the fifth pew at three pence each, eighteen men at two pence each in the next three pews, while in the last four pews twelve women were permitted to sit at a penny each.

How far from the spirit of the early Christians—and from the spirit of today—the seventeenth century churches of England had departed is evident from this record of 1629 of a church in Salisbury: "All the poore

of the new Almeshouse and all other the Church Poore shall sitt in the Church, according to former orders made upon Formes sett of purpose for them. And the Churchwardens are to see who are missing, and to keepe backe that weekes pay unles they can excuse it. And that the Formes may be knowen and not sate upon by others, there shall be these wordes painted in great Red letters upon the Formes, *For the Poore.*"

In our own country pews have been used in the churches since the days of the first settlers. There was equality in America, and all united in building and furnishing the houses of worship. The first pews were perhaps only plain benches, sawn out of timber. This fitted the stern Puritan of New England. But with increasing wealth more attention was paid to beauty and we begin to find evidence of simple adornment in the church seats. In more recent times pews are decorative and comfortable. The worshiper realizes that he need not be physically distraught when at his devotions, any more than he is at home. And he asks for beauty everywhere, for beauty is inspiring even in hours of worship. Church builders do well to devote as much attention to the comfort and carving of pews as they devote to any other feature of church furnishing. The whole interior should harmonize in beauty and proportion as well as in architectural detail and tone.

We are slowly overcoming a fallacy in the equipment of our churches which long has held us enslaved to the idea that the worshiper should sacrifice his comfort in order that he may more fully and profitably be guided by the word of God. The result of old ideas has been that churches having beautiful and artistic chancel equipment have been rendered artistically unbalanced by unattractive and uncomfortable pews. So incongruous is this lack of co-ordination in church equipment that the worshiper often feels ill at ease and does not get the full benefit either of the word or of his surroundings.

Baptismal Font—Modern

To be comfortable is as much an art as to be polite. One can be comfortable and still retain a posture of dignity and respect. Hence, the pews in our churches should contribute the same cultural comfort that is exemplified by the beauty of the altar, the pulpit, the screens or the lectern, where these form a part of interior church equipment. Unless there is harmony in church furniture, your church is not comfortable.

Then, there is the touch. The charm of good furniture in the home

End of Choir Stall—Modern

is its appeal to the sense of feeling. To find yourself in a church pew that is uncomfortable, unfinished and cold is not conducive to either spiritual or physical comfort. It is better by far to worship standing, as do the Eastern people, than to lose the effect of an harmonious setting by the introduction of unworthy church furniture that will contribute little or nothing to either body or soul. Seek comfort and beauty in the planning of your church furnishings and you will be rewarded by a wealth of contentment that will more than compensate you for any added outlay that may be entailed in getting the best.

APPROACHING THE IDEAL IN CHURCH FURNISHING

The reader may ask: "Where shall I find the ideal church with an interior adornment that will live, yet mildly in keeping with present day thought and in accord with modern concepts of beauty and taste?"

As before stated, there is no established rule governing the building and furnishing of churches. Each age, or epoch, has produced its particular type of art which houses of worship have echoed in their architecture and interior enrichment. But there are well established precedents which the builder may follow and which apply to the erection and embellishment of all kinds of churches, regardless of their size or cost. Exorbitant expenditures are not necessary in structure or decoration. The ideal church provides the soul with an environment appropriate to worship and the body with a comfort that is made sublime when the spirit is at rest. There is no more exaction of price in churchly proprieties than there is exaction of caste in the beauties of nature. The anemone of the meadow is as near perfection in its simplicity as is the orchid in all its splendor. Hence, the church need not be extravagantly equipped to come within the appeal of these reflections for a higher appreciation of art values in the building and beautifying of our temples.

Balance, proportion and propriety are the fundamentals of true art. Costly elaboration in an environment of simplicity is obviously as inappropriate as a barren assembly room would be for a congregation of wealth. For this reason, a committee, unfamiliar with the technique of church furnishings, cannot obtain correct results by assembling a railing, a pulpit, a lectern, a communion table and a few benches of stock design

and calling it an artistic and cultural ensemble. Regardless of whether these fitments are bought at the same time or acquired gradually, as income permits, they must bear a harmonious relation that can be obtained only as a result of study and thought on the part of those who have given their lives to the understanding of church equipment.

There is a simple solution to these problems. Every church, old or new, large or small, has available, without cost, the services of competent designers and craftsmen, trained in the ecclesiastic arts and in the production of church furnishings, who will, upon request, furnish plans and drawings of chancel arrangement appropriate to denominations, to the possible expenditure and to the desires and ambitions of the congregations. You can visualize your church before even the ground is broken upon which it will stand. Do not wait until the walls are completed and the roof is in place to decide upon interior adornment. Make your plans for the interior when you make your plans for the exterior. These are interdependent.

Whatever may be your plan for the interior of your church, bear in mind that the chancel should be a picture, a sermon, a vision. The altar rail should definitely separate the congregation from the chancel. The choir seating should not confuse the vision or divert attention from the altar, the highest and holiest of church investitures.

The communion table, the most sacrosanct of all church appurtenances where the altar is not used, should constitute the center of the chancel picture to which the eye will be led by other placings and should be of a character and fitness that will hold the interest during communion service. Where reredos are used they should harmonize with the atmosphere of the chancel. This is a detail often overdone. It is better to have no reredos than a garish amalgamation of wood and paint which can be neither named nor classified among the things that make for a beautiful church interior.

The ideal, therefore, will always be the church which adheres to propriety and whose builders, like those of ancient times, seek the best their means can command, in order that God may be glorified and man bettered because that ideal has been attained.

Riddle Post—
Modern

L'ENVOI

THE church of God has written its own history. While empires "rose and fell and slept," the Master has guided and guarded it. We have recorded only briefly the steps religion has taken and how it has glorified God in art and craftsmanship.

The church of the future will write its own history. What that history shall be must be determined by those who build our temples. In the future, as in the past, all that is ennobling, inspiring and beautiful must proceed from the church of God.

The arts bloomed fullest among nations which prospered materially—Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Germany, France, England. Always peace, wealth and enlightenment necessarily preceded the blooming of the arts.

Our own blessed country is peaceful, wealthy and enlightened. It is turning to the arts as with a general impulse. And this with reverence, with understanding, with a yearning to give expression to national cultural aspirations in all that is ennobling and inspirational.

Despite the gloomy pessimists, our moral and religious convictions are more intense, more elevated, more deeply rooted than ever before in the history of any great people. Because religion is practical, it is not less sincere. Genuine reverence is born of knowledge. The highest devotion to God comes from a comprehending people. Unless all evidence is to be mistrusted, we are at the beginning of another renaissance of the arts, of religion, of dignified and intelligent worship of the All-Father.

If these reflections have made anything clear, they have demonstrated the truth that the spiritual and the beautiful are inseparable and must thrive together. We have found their meeting place always in the temples of God. Beliefs, dogmas, creeds have changed, but there has been no variation in the urge to worship God in an atmosphere of serenity.

We cannot, if we would, separate the beautiful from the spiritual. As in the past, so in the future must that which is sublime find its first setting before and around the altars of the Most High. The future will judge us, as we judge the past, by the perfection of loveliness found in our houses of worship.

Having much, we must give much to God and His temples. Having received in abundance, we must give generously of the

material wealth which we cannot take into the Great Beyond. We dwell here only a day in limitless time, but our souls are immortal, the spirit everlasting. In every man and woman dwells the desire to live upon earth after the body has ceased to embrace the soul. In no way can we continue to be remembered quite so surely as by making the Lord's house a more fitting place of devotion for our fellows and for posterity.

Each and every individual cannot be a Phidias, a Michelangelo, a Dante. But each, in his own way, can become a patron of the artist, of the craftsman who, with our aid and encouragement, will create beauty and strive for perfection in the building and adornment of our sacred edifices.

Generations have blessed every Athenian who contributed one drachma to make possible the Parthenon; every lowly believer who gave a pittance that St. Peter's at Rome might arise; every Frenchman, German and Englishman who aided in the construction of the cathedrals of Notre Dame, Cologne and Salisbury.

It is within our province to join the immortal givers of history. If we will but take from that which God has loaned us and return it to His altar, we will be immeasurably repaid in the thought that our mite made the world a little better, a little finer, because of what we thus contributed to the glory of God.

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